A CANDID

ENQUIRY

INTO THE

CAUSES and MOTIVES

OF THE

Late RIOTS in the PROVINCE of MUNSTER in IRELAND;

BY THE PEOPLE CALLED

WHITE-BOYS or LEVELLERS.

With an

APPENDIX,

Containing other PAPERS on the same SUBJECT.

IN A

LETTER

TO

A Noble LORD in ENGLAND.

Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto. TER.

LONDON

Printed, and sold by W. FLEXNEY in Holborn, J. ALMON in PICCADILLY, and F. NEWBERY in Pater-noster-Row.
MDCCLXVII.

CONTENTS.

A Candid Enquiry into the Cauſes and Motives of the late Riots in the Province of Munſter in Ireland; by the People called White-boys or Levellers. P. 1

An Enquiry into the Cauſes of the Outrages, committed by the Levellers, or White-boys, in the province of Munſter, by M. S. Eſq. Taken from the Dublin Magazine for April, 1763. Page 25

Notes taken on the Trial of Edward Meighen, for the Murder of John Bridge, on the Night of the 28*th of October,* 1764, *by a Gentleman of the Jury; conſiſting of Anſwers made to the ſeveral Queſtions put to the Witneſſes.* Pag. 39

A circumſtantial Account of the Trial of Nicholas Sheehy, &c. for the Murder of John Bridge. Taken from Exſhaw's Magazine for March, 1766. P. 49

A Narrative, collected from authentic Materials, of the Proceedings at Clonmell, in the County of Tipperary, on the Trials of Mr. Edmond Sheehy, Mr. James Buxton, and Mr. John Farrel, for the Murder of John Bridge, on the Night of the 28*th of October,* 1764, *by virtue of a ſpecial Commiſſion; which Trials began the* 11*th, and continued to the* 15*th, of April,* 1766, *as every Priſoner was ſeperately tried, though for the ſame fact. Taken from Exſhaw's Magazine for April,* 1766. Pag. 52

An

CONTENTS.

An authentic Narrative of the Death and Execution of Mr. Edmond Sheehy, Mr. James Buxton, and Mr. James Farrel, who ſuffered at Clogheen on the 3d of May, 1766, for the murder of John Bridge; with their Declarations carefully compared with thoſe in the Hands of Mr. Butler, Sub-ſheriff of the County of Tipperary, who received them from the unfortunate People, at the Place of Execution; and atteſted by him. Taken from Exſhaw's Magazine for May, 1766. P. 59

The dying Declaration of Mr. Edmond Sheehy. P. 62

The dying Declaration of Mr. James Buxton. P. 66

The dying Declaration of Mr. James Farrell. P. 69

Extract of a Letter from Clonmell, September the 25th, 1766. Page 71

PRE-

PREFACE.

THE materials of the following Letter are drawn from notes taken at the trials of the criminals by ſome of their jury, and by others, prejudiced, indeed, not in their favour, but, againſt them;---from the verbal accounts of credible and unbiaſſed men, who carefully attended at theſe trials;—and from the dying declarations of the criminals themſelves.

As no reaſonable objection can lye againſt the firſt (which is the chief) part of theſe materials; ſo the relations of credible ear and eye-witneſſes, concerning recent facts, (which, if falſe, may be eaſily contradicted) is, ſurely, a competent ground of true hiſtory. And, as for the ſolemn teſtimonies of reputable men, in their laſt moments, they have ever carried great force of perſuaſion with them, in the eſtimation of wiſe and candid perſons of all ages, nations, and profeſſions; and they muſt carry ſtill greater in the inſtances before us, becauſe the men in queſtion might have preſerved their lives, by giving evidence contrary to theſe teſtimonies.

This laſt material circumſtance was wanting in the late famous caſe of the unfortunate Calas, a French proteſtant, unjuſtly put to death, on the ſcore of religion, by the cruel ſentence of bigotted judges; the improbability of his guilt, joined to his ſolemn denial of it, at his execution, having, alone, proved ſufficient to raiſe him ſo many able, and zealous advocates in different parts of Europe; and particularly excited the French court to have his ſentence reviſed, and cenſured; whereby his family at leaſt had ſome amends made them in their injured reputation. Nor were the

chiefs

chiefs of the French clergy themſelves, leſs forward than the court in ſhewing their beneficence on this very melancholy occaſion; for, upon receiving information of the wants and diſtreſſes of his ſon Lewis Calas, they, in * their laſt general aſſembly, came to a reſolution to make him a preſent of one hundred louisdores; and to ſettle a penſion upon him for life, out of their own fund: an example of humanity, juſtice, and generoſity, as worthy of imitation, on the preſent occaſion, as it is unlikely, from the preſent temper of many powerful men in the county † where the tragedy we are going to ſpeak of was acted, that it will ever be imitated, at leaſt by thoſe, upon whom theſe gentlemen can have the ſlighteſt influence.

* See the Amſterdam Gazette, Auguſt 1, 1766, and other public papers.

† See note * page 17.

A CANDID

ENQUIRY, &c.

My Lord,

IN obedience to your Lordſhip's commands, I now ſend you a brief account of that miſerable gang of rioters in Munſter, which, for theſe laſt four years, has given ſuch juſt offence, and, at the ſame time, raiſed ſo many groundleſs jealouſies and fears in different parts of this kingdom. But, as I purpoſe to ſend you nothing but what is authentic on this ſubject, ſo I muſt take the liberty to caution your Lordſhip againſt giving credit to any of thoſe flying reports, which you may meet with on your ſide of the water; as they are all tranſmitted from hence by thoſe very perſons, or their agents, whoſe tyrannical oppreſſions of the poor in that province did at firſt provoke, and have ſince increaſed, theſe tumults to their late exorbitant height; and who have no other way of concealing their own guilt, but by laying heavy accuſations on the innocent and defenceleſs.

The firſt, and principal, cauſe of theſe riots and diſturbances, as ſet forth in an ingenious and candid little Tract, publiſhed in 1762,* (which, to this day, remains

* An Inquiry into the Cauſes of the Outrages committed by the Levellers, or White boys, in the Province of Munſter, by M. S. Eſq; See the Appendix.

unanſwered, and, for aught I have heard to the contrary, even uncontradicted) is briefly, my Lord, as followeth.

" Some landlords in Munſter have ſet their lands " to cottiers far above their value; and, to lighten " their burthen, allowed commonage to their tenants, " by way of recompence: afterwards, in deſpite of " all equity, contrary to all compacts, the land- " lords encloſed theſe commons, and precluded " their unhappy tenants from the only means of " making their bargains tolerable. The Law, in- " deed, is open to redreſs them; but they do not " know the Laws, or how to proceed; or, if they " did know them, they are not equal to the expence " of a ſuit againſt a rich tyrant. Beſides, the greateſt " part of theſe tenures are by verbal agreement, " not by written compact. Here is another diffi- " culty: If theſe wretches ſhould apply to Law, " what could they do in this caſe? They were too " ignorant of the principles of equity, to ſeek a rea- " ſonable redreſs: They had too deep a ſenſe of their " ſufferings, to feel the leſs pungent call of virtue; " nay, they thought equity was on their ſide, and " iniquity on the part of their landlords, and thence " flew with eagerneſs to what is ever the reſource of " low and uncultivated minds, VIOLENCE."

A ſecond cauſe of theſe tumults, my Lord, is the price of land for potatoes; from whence ariſes a third cauſe, as grievous as either of the former two, namely, the cruel exactions of tythe-mongers: For, as the ſame tract obſerves, " It is not uncommon " in Munſter to charge from four to five guineas " per acre for potatoe-ground; but we ſhall ſup- " poſe the price but four guineas, that is ninety- " one ſhillings: The daily wages for labourers is " four pence per day: There are three hun- " dred and ſixty-five days in the year, of which " fifty-two are Sundays; and ſuppoſe but thirteen " holidays, the remainder is three hundred working " days; the wages for which is an hundred ſhillings,

" that

" that is nine ſhillings above the price of their land;
" of which nine ſhillings five are paid for the tythe;
" and two for hearth-money; and the remaining two
" go towards the rent of their cabbin. What is left?
" Nothing.—And, out of this nothing, they are to
" buy ſeed for their garden, ſalt for their potatoes, and
" rags for themſelves, their wives, and their children.
" ——It muſt be obſerved, that in this calculation
" I have mentioned three hundred working days,
" though it is known, from the greater number of
" holidays obſerved in that part of the kingdom than
" in any other, from the number of wet, and broken
" days, joined with the natural lazineſs of the peo-
" ple, there are not above two hundred days, for
" which they are paid.——What an aggravation
" does this make in the account? And will the beſt
" crop of potatoes enable them to maintain a family,
" often of ſix or eight perſons, under the difficulties
" we have mentioned?

" It is this exorbitant rent which produces the
" complaint of tythes. Ready money they have
" not; the reward of their labour goes in payment
" of their rent; they can ſeldom amaſs the mighty
" ſum of two ſhillings to pay their hearth-money;
" how then ſhall they collect five ſhillings for tythes?—
" The clergymen in that country poſſeſs livings of
" vaſt extent, and little emolument: There are
" ſome livings which have a thouſand acres under
" black cattle. Here the incumbent gets nothing;
" and the cottiers gardens become his principal ſup-
" port.—A gentleman of birth, perhaps, piety, and
" learning, is brought to the diſagreeable neceſſity of
" chaffering with a ſet of poor wretches for two-pence,
" or ſix-pence, in a bargain, or forego the ſupport of his
" own family. This buſineſs grows irkſome to him,
" and he ſeeks ſome one perſon, who will take the
" whole trouble upon him. The diſtreſs of the pa-
" riſhoner is heightened by this agreement; and the
" tythe-monger, who is generally more rapacious

" than humane, ſqueezes out the very vitals of the " people; and, by proceſs, citation, and ſequeſtra- " tion, drags from them the little, which the land- " lord and the king had left them.

" Theſe," continues my Author, " are the real, " and apparent cauſes of the rioters conduct: In all " their circular letters they have deſired a redreſs of " theſe grievances; and, in the ſmall compaſs of my " reading, I find no nation that has not had tumults " from ſuch, or like cauſes, without religion coming " into the queſtion."

Although, my Lord, the preſent humour of giv- ing the formidable name of a Popiſh rebellion to theſe diſturbances, has, indeed, ſomething in it ex- ceedingly ridiculous, whether we conſider the few- neſs, inſignificance, and nakedneſs of the perſons concerned; or the obvious impoſſibility of the ſuc- ceſs of ſuch an undertaking: yet I ſhall endeavour to treat that deluſion with as much ſerioufneſs, as the folly and extravagance of it will admit; or rather, as the tragical uſe, that has been of late made of it, will naturally extort from me.

But I muſt firſt remind your Lordſhip, that this is not the only time, that the Province of Munſter has been alarmed with vain and idle panics of this kind. HENRY, Earl of Clarendon, Lord Lieutenant of this kingdom, in 1685, takes notice, in one of his Let- ters *, that in his Time, " there were great rumours " in the counties of Waterford and Cork, of plots, " and deſigns of riſing; and that ſeveral informa- " tions had been brought to him *of great meetings, in* " *the night, of armed men*; but that, upon his finding " there were no juſt grounds for theſe informations " and reports, he had directed the juſtices of the " peace, at the aſſizes, to give it in charge to the " grand juries, to preſent all theſe reports of riſings, " as *ſpread with a malicious intention* to diſturb the

* State Letters.

" peace,

" peace of the kingdom. And this (his Lordſhip " adds) had a good effect; for ſeveral perſons were " indicted on that account; and people were very " quiet as to that matter, ever after, in Munſter."

Had ſome ſuch courſe as this, my Lord, been taken in the preſent caſe; or, had theſe rioters been patiently heard, and moderately redreſſed, in the beginning, theſe diſturbances would, probably, have long ſince ceaſed. A ludicrous paſſage, in the reign of James I. in England, (yet ſimilar, in its cauſe, to the tragedy now acting in Ireland) may chance to throw ſome light on this conjecture: " A com- " motion was ſtirred up by ſome commoners, againſt " engroſſing their ground, when the king chanced " to be invited, in his hunting journey, to dine with " Sir Thomas—and turning ſhort at the corner of a " common, happened near to a country-man ſitting " by the heels in the ſtocks, who cried Hoſanna! to " his majeſty; which invited the king to aſk the " reaſon of his reſtraint. Sir Thomas ſaid, it was " ſtealing geeſe from the common: The fellow re- " plied, who is the greateſt thief, I, for ſtealing " geeſe from the common, or his worſhip, for ſteal- " ing the common from the geeſe?—The king im- " mediately ordered the common to be reſtored to " the poor, and the witty fellow to be releaſed; and " care was taken to quiet the commotions.*"

In the Year 1762, when theſe riots firſt commenced, we were at open war with France, and often threatend with an invaſion from thence; for which reaſon, my Lord, an inſurrection in its favour here was, undoubtedly, then, much more to be apprehended, than in any of theſe laſt four years of profound tranquility and peace with that kingdom; † and

* Saunderſon, K. James.

† Two public incidents, on the part of France, that happened about that time, evidently prove, that neither then, nor ſince, was there any ſort of agreement, combination, or underſtanding,

yet, even at that critical juncture, we were told by authority, " That the authors of these riots, " (in Munster) consisted indiscriminately of persons " of different persuasions; and that no marks of " disaffection to his majesty's person or government " appeared on that occasion, in any of these people.*"

This authentic and public declaration was grounded on the reports of several persons of known loyalty and eminence in the law, who had been commissioned by the then government of Ireland, to enquire, on the spot, into the causes of these disturbances; the truth of which reports was, afterwards, confirmed by the going judges of assize; who, on that account, suffered much from the hatred, obloquy, and insolence of the disappointed bashaws of that Province. This my Lord, was particularly the case of Lord Chief Justice Aston, now with you in England, to whose testimony I appeal; and whose removal from hence, at this juncture, these people deeply regret; still following him with their most grateful wishes and prayers for his welfare.

It is well worthy of remark, that of the many unhappy men, that were executed for outrages committed in these riots, from the beginning to the present time, not a single person was convicted of rebellion, though uncommon pains have been taken, and means used, at all their tryals, to prove them guilty of that crime; nor has there been one of these so executed, that did not, at his death, publicly and solemnly deny, that he had ever entertained a thought of that kind †. In July, 1762, five of these rioters,

ing, between that court and the papists of Ireland, for the purpose of an invasion. First, the order published by the French king, during the last war, for banishing all the Irish, as well as English, out of his dominions; which was strictly executed. And, secondly, his breaking or reforming the Irish regiments, (which, surely, would have been the propereſt of all his troops to invade Ireland) after the peace was concluded.

* London Gazette, Whitehall, May, 1762.

† See their speeches, annexed to queries concerning the White Boys.

viz.

viz. Darby Brown, Patrick Brown, David Ahearn, Richard Haly, and Richard Power, were hanged at Waterford, for being preſent at the burning down the cabin of John Fowloe, (upon the information of John Corkeran, one of their gang, and the very perſon, who, with his own hand, ſet fire to it.) Yet theſe wretches ſolemnly declared, at the place of execution, "That it never entered into their thoughts to do any "thing againſt the king, or the government." Which declaration, my Lord, coming from perſons in the inſtant they were going to the dead, muſt be convincing with all, but ſuch as will not be perſuaded, though one roſe from the dead to convince them.

But the perſon moſt of all obnoxious on this occaſion, and whoſe life was moſt eagerly ſought after, on a real, or affected, ſuppoſition of his having primarily ſtirred up, and (with French money and officers) ſupported theſe rioters for the purpoſe of rebellion, was one Nicholas Sheehy, pariſh prieſt of Clogheen. This Sheehy, my Lord, was a giddy, officious, but not ill-meaning, man, with ſomewhat of a quixotiſh caſt of mind towards the relieving of all thoſe, whom he fancied to be injured or diſtreſſed; and, ſetting aſide his unavoidable connexion with theſe rioters, (for ſome hundreds of them were his pariſhoners) a perſon of good character in all other reſpects. In the courſe of theſe diſturbances, he had been often indicted, and tried as a popiſh prieſt; but, no ſufficient evidence appearing againſt him on that charge, he was always acquitted, to his own great misfortune; for, had he been convicted, his puniſhment, which was only tranſportation, might have prevented his ignominious death, which ſoon after followed.

In 1765, the government was prevailed upon to iſſue a proclamation againſt him, as guilty of high treaſon, offering an extraordinary reward of three hundred pounds for taking him; which Sheehy, in his retreat, happening to hear of, immediately wrote

up to ſecretary W---te, acquainting him, that, as he was not conſcious to himſelf of any ſuch crime, he would ſave the government the reward offered for taking him, by ſurrendering himſelf out of hand, to be tried for any crime he was accuſed of; not at Clonmell, (where he feared the power and malice of his enemies were too prevalent for juſtice) but at the court of King's-bench, in Dublin.

His propoſal being accepted, he was accordingly brought up to Dublin, and tried there for rebellion; of which, however, after a ſevere ſcrutiny of fourteen hours, (and none but a black-guard-boy, a common proſtitute, and an impeached thief, appearing againſt him,) he was fully, and honourably, acquitted.

But his enemies, who purſued him to Dublin, had vowed his deſtruction, at all events; for, after his acquittal for rebellion, he was indicted for the murder of one Bridge, who had informed againſt ſome of theſe rioters, and was (it is ſaid) murdered by them, in revenge. Sheehy (notwithſtanding the promiſe given him, on ſurrendering himſelf to the government) was tranſmitted to Clonmell, to be tryed there for this new crime; and, upon the oaths of the ſame infamous witneſſes *, whoſe teſtimonies had been juſtly rejected in Dublin, was condemned to be hanged, and quartered.

The night before the execution, which was but the ſecond after his ſentence, he wrote a letter to Major Sirr, wherein he declared his innocence of the crime for which he was next day to ſuffer. And, on the morning of that day, juſt before he was brought forth to execution, he, in the preſence of the ſub-ſheriff, and a clergyman who attended him, again declared his innocence of the murder; ſolemnly proteſting, at the ſame time, as he was a dying man, and juſt going to appear before the moſt awful of tribunals,

* Quere whether any other witneſſes were produced.

that

that he never had engaged any of the rioters in the ſervice of the French king, by tendering them oaths, or otherwiſe; that he never had diſtributed money among them on that account; nor had ever received money from France, or any other foreign court, either directly, or indirectly, for any ſuch purpoſe: that he never knew of any French, or other foreign officers being among thoſe rioters; or of any Roman Catholics of property, or note, being concerned or connected with them.

Meehan *, who ſuffered with him for the ſame fact, made the like ſolemn declaration of his innocence, as to all theſe particulars.

From the infamy of the witneſſes †, on whoſe teſtimonies this unhappy man was convicted at Clonmell, your Lordſhip will be apt to think, that he was not very equitably dealt with at his trial. You will think ſo the more, when I tell you, what is a known matter of fact, that, on the day of his tryal, a party of horſe ſurrounded the C----t, admitting, and excluding

* John Henderkin ſwore that he lay the whole night that Bridge was ſworn to have been murdered in Meehan's Houſe.---That he did not ſleep an hour all that night.----That Meehan could not go out unknown to him.---That he found him (Meehan) at work in the morning, &c. See the Appendix.

† Mary Brady ſwore ſhe followed Michael Kearney, to the place where Bridge was murdered, in the night, October 1764, though Flannery, Gorman, Keating, Keef, and Ann Hallan, poſitively ſwore, that Kearney had left the kingdom before in April 1763, and had not then returned. Mary Brady's mother and ſiſter ſwore, that, on the ſaid night of the murder, ſhe (Mary Brady) ſlept with them in the ſame bed; and all the night before and after, and did not leave them; and that ſhe was not to be believed upon her oath. See ib. John Toohy, the other witneſs, confeſſed, that he was committed for horſe-ſtealing,---that he firſt gave in Examinations againſt the priſoners about a month after his committal;--ſwore that he lived with Buxton three years, though Buxton dying ſolemnly declared that he never lived a day with him;--ſwore John Butler, and Thomas Magrath were preſent at the murder; though the firſt was proved to be lying ſick of a fever at the time; and the other abſent. See ib.

whom

whom they thought proper; while others of them, with a certain knight at their head, ſcampered the ſtreets in a formidable manner; forcing into inns, and private lodgings, in the town; challenging, and queſtioning, all new-comers; menacing his friends, and encouraging his enemies.---Even after ſentence of death was pronounced againſt him, (which, one would think, might have fully ſatisfied his enemies) Mr. S----w, his attorney, declares, that he found it neceſſary for his ſafety, to ſteal out of the town by night, and with all poſſible ſpeed to eſcape to Dublin.

During his tryal, Mr. Keating, a perſon of known property and credit in that country, giving the cleareſt and fulleſt evidence, that, on the whole night of the ſuppoſed murder of Bridge, the priſoner, Nicholas Sheehy, had lain in his houſe; that he could not have left it in the night-time without his knowledge; and, conſequently, that he could not be even preſent at the murder.---The revd. Mr. H——on ſtood up; and, after looking on a paper that he held in his hand, informed the court, that he had Mr. Keating's name on his liſt, as one of thoſe that were concerned in the murder of the ſerjeant and corporal at New-market*; upon which Mr. Keating was immediately hurried away to Kilkenny goal; where he lay for ſome time, loaded with irons, in a dark and loathſome dungeon. By this proceeding, my Lord, not only his evidence was rendered uſeleſs to Sheehy, but alſo that of many others was prevented, who came to teſtify the ſame thing; but who inſtantly withdrew themſelves, for fear of meeting with the ſame treatment.

* The killing of theſe two men happened in a reſcue of ſome of theſe rioters, whom a ſmall guard were carrying to priſon. The reſcuers paid dearly for their raſhneſs; for above thirty of them were mortally wounded by the guard, and died in goal. Some of them died on carts as they were carrying to goal. Thoſe of them, who did not die of their wounds, were hanged.

Mr.

Mr. Keating was afterwards tried for the Newmarket murder at the aſſizes of Kilkenny; but by the palpable and manyfold prevarications, contradictions, and perjuries of the proſecutors, was ſoon, and honourably acquitted. --The purpoſe, however, of Mr. H———on, and his employers, was fully anſwered. For Sheehy, my Lord, had been hanged and quartered ſome time before, *on the oaths of theſe very proſecutors.*

Every body knows, that Sheehy could, if he pleaſed, have made his eſcape to France, when he firſt heard of the proclamation for taking him; and, as it is pretended, that he was, from the beginning of theſe diſturbances, a faithful agent for the French king, he could not doubt of finding a kind reception, and ſuitable recompence for his ſervices, in any part of his dominions. Now, my Lord, be pleaſed to conſider, would he, or would any man, conſcious of the complicated guilt of rebellion and murder, have wilfully neglected the double opportunity, of eſcaping the puniſhment due to ſuch crimes, and of living at his eaſe, and in ſafety, in another kingdom? Would he thus freely have ſubmitted himſelf to a public tryal, without money, friends, intereſt, or connexions; and above all, without that innocence, on which alone he might rely? For my part, when I join in my mind theſe circumſtances of his conduct with his ſolemn declaration of his innocence at his death, I cannot poſſibly conceive him guilty, without ſuppoſing him to have been, what no man ever was or ever will be at one and the ſame time; that is, a moſt ſenſeleſs ideot, and a moſt artful hypocrite.

Emboldened by this ſucceſs, the knight before mentioned publiſhed an advertiſement, wherein he preſumed to cenſure the wiſe and vigilant adminiſtrations of our two laſt chief governors, and even to charge them with the deſtruction of many of his majeſty's ſubjects, for not having countenanced ſuch meaſures, with reſpect to theſe rioters, as were manifeſtly

ſeſtly repugnant to all the rules of prudence, juſtice, and humanity. Nor did his boldneſs ſtop there; for, naming a certain day in ſaid advertiſement, when the following perſons of credit, and ſubſtance, viz. Edmond Sheehy, James Buxton, James Farrel, and others, were to be tried by commiſſion at Clonmell, for the aforeſaid murder of Bridge, (as if he meant, by numbers, to intimidate even their judges into lawleſs rigour and ſeverity;) he ſent forth an authoritive kind of ſummons "to every gentleman of the "county to attend that commiſſion," his ſummons was punctually obeyed by his numerous, and powerful friends; and his deſign ſucceeded to all their wiſhes; for theſe poor men, alſo, were then, and there, ſentenced to be hanged and quartered.

Your Lordſhip will naturally ask, upon what new evidence this ſentence was paſſed; not imagining, I believe, that any uſe was made of the former infamous witneſſes on this occaſion. Yes, my Lord, uſe was made of them, and a principal uſe too, in the conviction of theſe devoted men. But the managers for the crown, as they affected to call themſelves, being either afraid, or aſhamed, to truſt the ſucceſs of their cauſe to the now enfeebled teſtimonies of theſe miſcreants, looked out for certain props, under the name of *approvers*, to ſtrengthen and ſupport their tottering evidence. Theſe they ſoon found in the perſons of Herbert, and Bier *, two priſoners impeached, like the reſt, for the murder of Bridge; and, who, tho' abſolute ſtrangers to it, were, nevertheleſs, in equal danger of being hanged for the ſame. Herbert †, a farmer, came to the aſſizes of Clonmell, in order to give evidence in favour of the prieſt Sheehy; but, his arrival being made known to the Grand Jury, (who, it was pretended, had found bills of high treaſon againſt him) they ſent the witneſs Toohy, and — B—ll, Eſq; attended by ſome of the light-horſe, to take him priſoner. Herbert,

* See the Appendix. † ib.

when

when taken, immediately became an evidence for the crown; but upon what motive, whether for the ſake of juſtice, the fear of hanging, or the hopes of a reward, is left to your Lordſhip to determine.

As for Bier, the other approver, Mr. Sheehy, at his death, declared, "That he ſaw him take a "voluntary oath more than once in the goal of Clon-"mell, (before he was converted into a witneſs for "the crown) that he knew nothing of the murder of "Bridge;" and adds, "That he believed him.*" Yet this murder Bier ſwore againſt Buxton in particular; for which the latter was condemned, and executed.

The ſum of Herbert's evidence was, "That he "was called upon by Sheehy, and brought to a "meeting of about twenty, or thirty, perſons, aſſem-"bled on the lands of Shambally, near Clogheen; "where they were ſworn by the prieſt Nicholas "Sheehy, to murder John Bridge, John Bagwell, "&c. and every other perſon who ſhould oppoſe "them; and that they would be *faithful to the French "king, conquer Ireland, and make it their own.*" †

Mr. Sheehy, at the place of execution, ſolemnly declared, "That he never ſaw Herbert, until the "day of his trial; and that he never heard an oath "of allegiance to any foreign king, or prince, pro-"poſed, or adminiſtered, in his life-time; nor ever "knew any thing of the murder of Bridge, until he "heard it publicly mentioned; nor did he know "there ever was any ſuch deſign on foot.‡"

Theſe, my Lord, are contradictory teſtimonies, and, therefore, one of them muſt be certainly falſe. But which of them that is, your Lordſhip may probably gueſs, by making a little reflection on the different circumſtances of each. For my part, when I conſider, on one hand, that theſe approvers were ſtruck with the fear of death, and, at the ſame time, certain, that their pardon was to be obtained only by

* ib. May. † ib. ‡ ib.

ſuch

ſuch teſtimony as they gave; (for which, however falſe, they knew they were not to be called to an immediate account in the next world, and might have flattered themſelves with hopes of time, and opportunity, for repentance in this) and, on the other, when I recollect, that the dying priſoners had often rejected the like offer of pardon, rather than violate truth, or injure innocence: And that they ſolemnly denied the crimes they were to ſuffer for, in the very article of death; though conſcious that they were inſtantly to account for ſuch denial before an all-juſt, and all-ſeeing Judge: I ſay, my Lord, when I conſider this wide difference between the teſtimonies of the accuſers, and the accuſed, I cannot help concluding, that the oaths of the former were wilful P——s, prompted by the hopes of a pardon, of which the ſhedding of innocent blood was to be the only purchaſe; and that the ſolemn declarations of the latter were noble, and ſucceſsful, efforts of truth, conſcience, and honour, againſt the ſtrongeſt temptations to the contrary, that the love of life, and the tendereſt connections and endearments of this world could have thrown in their way.

But to return to Herbert's evidence; I ſhall ſay nothing, my Lord, as to that part of it, which mentions an oath taken by theſe rioters *to conquer Ireland*, becauſe I would not ſo far offend againſt the preſent modiſh credulity on this occaſion, as even to doubt of the ability and ſufficiency of twenty, or thirty, of theſe raggamuffins to effect ſuch a deſign. But I ſhould be glad to be taught, how to reconcile their ſwearing allegiance to the French King, and that they would continue faithful to him, with their ſwearing, at the ſame time, to make *Ireland their own*, after they ſhould have conquered it. If ſuch palpable inconſiſtency be not a ſure mark of a reluctant, confounded, and ſelf-convicted witneſs, nothing, certainly, ever was.

But

But waving this advantage, the main drift and ſubſtance of this evidence are totally overturned by the oath of James Prendergaſt, Eſq; a Witneſs for Mr Sheehy, perfectly unexceptionable in point of character, fortune, and religion. This gentleman depoſed, "that on the day, and hour, on which "the murder was ſworn to have been commited, "viz. about or between the hours of ten and eleven "o'clock on the night of the 28th of October; "1764, Edmund Sheehy, the priſoner, was with "him, and others, in a diſtant part of the country; "—that they, and their wives had, on the afore-"ſaid 28th of October, dined at the houſe of Mr. "Joſeph Tenniſon, near Ardſinan, in the county "of Tipperary, where they continued until after "ſupper; that it was about eleven o'clock, when "he, and the priſoner, left the houſe of Mr. Tenni-"ſon, and rode a conſiderable way together, on "their return to their reſpective homes; that the "priſoner had his wife behind him; —that, when "they parted, he (Mr. Prendergaſt) rode directly "home; where, on his arrival, he looked at the "clock, and found it was the hour of twelve exact-"ly.—That, as to the day of their dining with Mr. "Tenniſon (Sunday the 28th) he was *poſitive* and "*particular* from this circumſtance; that the day "following was to be the Fair-day of Clogheen; "where he requeſted that Mr. Sheehy would diſpoſe "of ſome bullocks for him, himſelf not being able "to attend that Fair." Paul Webber of Cork, butcher, ſwore, "that he ſaw Mr. Sheehy, and conver-"ſed with him about Mr. Prendergaſt's bullocks, "on the 29th of October, at the Fair of Clogheen:" And the oath of Thomas Maſon confirmed the particulars of the night, and the hour, of Mr. Sheehy's return home from Mr. Tenniſon's houſe *."

Your

* ib.

Your Lordſhip will, no doubt, be curious to know, what it was that could invalidate ſuch credible, clear, and circumſtantial evidence, in favour of the priſoner? It was, my Lord, Mr. Tenniſon's ſwearing, not any thing, indeed, that contradicted the ſubſtance of Mr Prendergaſt's evidence, but ſomething that did not coroborate, and confirm it! For Tenniſon, in his depoſition, confeſſes, * "That Sheehy had "dined at his houſe in October, 1764." Nay, he does not directly deny that it was on the 28th of that month; for he only ſays, ‡ "That he is in-"clined to think, it was earlier in the month than "the 28th †."—But is it not ſtrange, my Lord, that ſuch *poſitive* and *particular* proof, as that produced by Mr. Prendergaſt, with the circumſtances of the day, and the hour, atteſted upon oath by two other witneſſes, whoſe veracity ſeems not to have been queſtioned, ſhould be over-ruled, and ſet aſide, by the vague and indeterminate ſurmiſe of Mr. Tenniſon? Mr. Prendergaſt ſwears *poſitively* to the affirmative of Sheehy's dining at Mr. Tenniſon's Houſe on the 28th of October, 1764. Mr. Tenniſon ſwears *doubtingly* to the negative; that is, "That "he is inclined to think that Mr Sheehy did not "dine at his houſe on the 28th." Is it not, my Lord, harder to prove a negative, than an affirmative; and, conſequently, is not fuller, clearer, and more circumſtantial evidence neceſſary to make out, and elucidate, the former, than the latter? And has not the reverſe of this received maxim been adopted, and

* It is to no purpoſe to alledge, that in the Account, from whence all this is taken, Mr Tenniſon ſays, that he is poſitive that Mr. Sheehy, and the company mentioned, did not dine with him more than once in October 1764. for whether they did or no, was not at all the queſtion; the ſole point to be determined in this caſe, was, whether they dined with him on the 28th of that Month, which he is far from *poſitively denying*; *and only ſays, he is inclined to believe they did not.*

‡ ib. † ib.

and avowed, in the preſent inſtance? Suppoſe my Lord, the evidence were equal on both ſides, which is very far from being the fact, ought not judgement, in that caſe, to incline rather towards favour, than puniſhment? And ſhall Mr. Tenniſon's bare conjecture on the negative ſide, and that of puniſhment too, have more weight with *upright Judges*, and *an impartial Jury*, than Mr. Prendergaſt's poſitive, and particular oath on the affirmative ſide of favour, and mercy? If your Lordſhip ſhould tell me for anſwer to theſe queſtions, that it has thus ſeemed meet to all the *Knight*'s zealous friends, and lovers of juſtice; (and in truth, I ſee not what other anſwer can be given) I ſhall only reply with this hearty wiſh, and prayer, that God may preſerve your Lordſhip, myſelf, and every honeſt man, from ever falling into the hands of ſuch lovers of juſtice!

On Saturday morning, May 3d. 1766, theſe convicts were hanged and quartered at Clogheen, notwithſtanding the frequent, and earneſt ſollicitations of ſeveral perſons of quality in their favour †; who, being perſuaded of their innocence, hoped to obtain for them, if not a pardon, at leaſt ſome mitigation of their puniſhment by tranſportation, or a reprieve.*—Their behaviour at the place of execution was chearful, but devout; and modeſt, though reſolute. It was impoſſible for any one in their circumſtances to counterfeit that reſignation, ſerenity, and

 pleaſing

† The chief, and moſt active, of theſe worthy perſonages was the right honourable Lord viſcount Taaffe; whoſe great goodneſs of heart, and unwearied endeavours, on all occaſions, to ſerve his poor Countrymen, add new luſtre to his Nobility; and will be for ever remembered by them with the warmeſt and moſt reſpectful gratitude.

* It is no wonder that their ſollicitations were vain; for the Knight ſo often mentioned, Mr. B——ll, &c. &c. had been before with the L——d L——t, and declared that, if any favour were ſhewn to theſe people, they would follow the example of a noble p—r, and quit the kingdom in a body.

pleaſing hope, which appeared ſo ſtrikingly in all their countenances and geſtures. Conſcious of their innocence, they ſeemed to haſten to receive the reward prepared, in the next life, for thoſe, who ſuffer patiently for its ſake in this. For, not content to forgive, they prayed for, and bleſſed, their proſecutors, judges, and jury; as likewiſe all thoſe, who might have been otherwiſe inſtrumental in their deaths. After they were tied up, and juſt before they were turned off, each of them, in his turn, read a paper aloud †, without tremor, heſitation, or other viſible emotion; wherein they ſolemnly proteſted as dying chriſtians, who were quickly to appear before the judgment-ſeat of God," that they had no ſhare, " either of act, counſel, or knowledge, in the mur- " der of Bridge; that they never heard an oath of " allegiance to any foreign Prince propoſed or ad- " miniſtered among them; that they never heard, " that any ſcheme of rebellion, high treaſon, or ma- " ſſacre was intended, offered, or even thought of, " by any of them; that they never knew of any " commiſſions, or French or Spaniſh officers, being " ſent; or of any money being paid to theſe riot- " ters: After which they ſeverally declared, in the " ſame ſolemn manner, that the Rev. Mr. J——n " H——n, the Rev. Mr. L—— B——k, E——d " B——l, Eſq.; Mr. M——w B——y, Sir R—d " B—'s ſon, and others from the grand jury, had " tampered with them at different times, preſſing " them to make, what they called, uſeful diſcoveries, " by giving in examinations againſt numbers of ro- " man catholics of fortune, (ſome of whom they " particularly named) as concerned in a rebellion, " and maſſacre, which were never once thought of: " But, above all, that they urg'd them to ſwear, that " the prieſt, Nicholas Sheehy, *died with a lie in his* " *mouth*; *without which* they told them, *no other diſ-*

coveries

† See Append.

" *coveries would avail them.* Upon theſe conditions, " they promiſed, and undertook, to procure their " pardons; acquainting them, at the ſame time, that " they ſhould certainly be hanged, if they did not " comply with them," And thus, my Lord, did theſe men bravely prefer even that death to ſuch a life of guilt, remorſe, and ſhame, as their tempters, and the wretches ſeduced by them, are curſed with in this world; and, (if they repent not in time) will be d—d for in the next.

To diſbelieve, or miſdoubt, the ſolemn teſtimonies of men, juſt on the point of yielding up thier lives as ſo many ſacrifices to truth and innocence, is, indeed, a kind of ſcepticiſm, as abſurd, as it is ungenerous; but to pretend, (as ſome I hear do) that theſe men had, or could have had, a diſpenſation or licence from their clergy, to publiſh falſhoods at the hour of their death, is ſuch a barefaced impoſition, and ſo wretched a reſource, that it ſeems to me to amount to an indirect confeſſion of their innocence; as it plainly ſhews to what ridiculous ſhifts their accuſers are driven, to find out ſome colour of a proof of the reality of their guilt.

Our religion, my Lord, derives no benefit, or honour, from the impoſing of opinions on Papiſts, which are manifeſtly inconſiſtent with their avowed, and moſt eſſential, tenets. Many inſtances might be produced, wherein theſe people have both fairly detected, and juſtly expoſed, the authors of ſuch ill-judged impoſitions; and ſhall we ſtill continue to cram down their throats creeds and principles, which they nauſeate to ſuch a degree, as ſometimes to reject them in our faces, to our confuſion and diſgrace?—No man, who believes God to be the ſupreme author, lover, and rewarder of truth, (I will not ſay does, but) *can* think it lawful for him to affirm ſeriouſly, and ſolemnly, a known falſhood at any time, or upon any account whatever. There is ſomething in conſcious untruth ſo repugnant to our nature and reaſon, that

it is impoſſible to avow, and profeſs it *for its own ſake*, or without a view to ſome apparent good, either of profit or pleaſure, ariſing from it; for which reaſon, ſuch profeſſion, when made with a proſpect of living ſome time after it, is ever attended with a latent hope of finding an opportunity for attonement and repentance. But ſuch hope is intirely out of the queſtion, with reſpect to the profeſſions of men, who moſt aſſuredly know, that they are within a very few moments of dying; and who, therefore, cannot poſſibly be influenced by thoſe motives of worldly profit, or pleaſure, which alone can render any profeſſions liable to juſt ſuſpicion. To ſay that theſe men were made to expect their reward in the next life, is to ſay that they were made to believe, with all their ſenſes about them, and in their laſt moments, a blaſphemous abſurdity and contradiction, *viz.* That the ſupreme author, lover, and rewarder of truth, is alſo an encourager, abettor, and rewarder of falſhood.

A very ſmall acquaintance with the ways and diſpoſitions of men, who firmly and conſcientiouſly believe, that they muſt hereafter render a ſtrict account of all their thoughts, words, and actions, (a belief, my Lord, wherein chriſtians of all ſects and denominations are, I think, agreed) is ſufficient to convince us, that, whatever a man's religion, or party, may be; or how ſtrongly ſoever he may be attached to it in his life-time, ſincerity will ſtill prevail, at the laſt hour, over all other conſiderations. Thus we ſee, the Papiſts that were hanged for the Powder-plot, (in which caſe, ſurely, if in any, a diſpenſation to prevaricate, for the credit of their religion was neceſſary, and, if poſſible, would have been obtained) being fully ſenſible of the attrociouſneſs of their crime, not only * publicly confeſſed, but alſo bitterly lamented it, at the place of execution; moſt fervently imploring God's mercy, and forgiveneſs for the ſame; while,

* See Biſhop of Lincoln's Hiſtory of the Powder-plot, &c.

on

on the other hand, the ſuffering regicides *, who believed they had done a meritorious act in murdering their king, and ſubverting the conſtitution, not only avowed, and vindicated, their horrid parricide, at the hour of their death, but alſo gloried in it; ſome of them declaring, with their laſt breath, "That if it were to be done again, they would do it;" a declaration, my Lord, which even the known policy and craft of theſe people were not able to ſuppreſs at that juncture, though they could not but foreſee, that it would leave an undeniable ſtain on their memories and principles; and be of infinite prejudice to all thoſe of their perſuaſion who were to ſucceed them, as long as monarchy ſubſiſted in theſe kingdoms.

I mean not to inſinuate, by this compariſon, that the numerous body of ſectaries now exiſting among us inherit, univerſally, this dangerous ſpirit of their predeceſſors. I know that ſome, even of theſe predeceſſors, did, at length, ſee the precipice into which they were falling, when they were juſt arrived at its brink; and therefore did vehemently preach, write, and proteſt againſt the murder of their king, at the very time that their chiefs had it under conſideration and debate: But, as this fit of loyalty in them came too late to prevent that dreadful cataſtrophe, to which their own former behaviour had directly, though, perhaps, inſenſibly, led the way: So, my Lord, if we may judge of the natural tendency of the principles of the preſent race of ſectaries, by what falls from them, over their cups, when their hearts are moſt open, and their tongues unreſtrained, their being ſo apt, on ſuch occaſions, to celebrate the praiſes, and toaſt the memory, of that arch-rebel, and regicide, *Cromwel*, would incline one to ſuſpect, that they had not yet entirely renounced that antimonarchial ſpirit of their predeceſſors, whatever they may have occaſionally ſworn, or profeſſed

* See the trial and laſt ſpeeches of the regicides.

to the contrary.—Of this ſtamp, however, for the moſt part, were the men, that firſt gave the name of rebellion to theſe diſturbances in Munſter; and have been, ever ſince, the chief, inſtigating cauſes, of the ſhedding of ſo much innocent blood there, on that falſe, and ridiculous, pretence; at the ſame time that they were thoroughly ſenſible, that both the name and puniſhment of rebellion were more juſtly applicable to the wanton, and dangerous inſurrection of their own brethern in Ulſter in 1763; when, upon infinitely leſs provocation than the Munſter-rioters had, upwards of thirty thouſand of not the meaneſt of them roſe up in arms, attacked his majeſty's forces *; and not only obſtructed the courſe of juſtice themſelves, but compelled even the magiſtrates to take unlawful oaths to obſtruct it; affronting every where, and, in ſome places, cruelly, and ignominiouſly, mal-treating, the miniſters of the eſtabliſhed church, of all ranks and ſtations †, threatening to force the ſolemn league and covenant upon them, and to eſtabliſh the kirk of Scotland in all his majeſty's dominions; yet, of ſome hundreds of theſe northern inſurgents, taken in actual hoſtility againſt the government, one only was capi-

* The proclamation iſſued by the Lords Juſtices of Ireland on this occaſion ſets forth, among other things, "That theſe inſurgents obſtructed, and prevented the execution of the laws; and intimidated his majeſty's ſubjects from recovering their legal rights: and that, the more effectually to anſwer *their ſaid traiterous purpoſes*, they had, by threats and violence, compelled ſeveral of the magiſtrates, and others of his majeſty's ſubjects, *to take unlawful oaths*, that they would aid and aſſiſt them in ſuch *their traiterous deſigns*, to the great terror of his majeſty's ſubjects, the breach of his majeſty's peace, and the obſtruction of juſtice. See Dublin Gazetteer for 1763.

† In a letter to Mr.——of London-derry, theſe inſurgents ſtile themſelves, "Reformers of abuſes in church and ſtate;---deſire him to turn out of that city, (where they flew for refuge) thoſe high flying clergy, who call themſelves high churchmen,—who would overſet *their moſt undefiled church of Scotland*;"---bid him 'mind the ſolemn league and covenant," and mention the brave actions of Oliver Cromwel, *their firſt deliverer*." See Exſhaw's Magazine for 1763.

tally

fally convicted; and even that one was ſoon after pardoned, at the requeſt, or RATHER BY THE THREATS, of his powerful partizans. So that, my Lord, one might be tempted to think, by comparing theſe facts, that innocent papiſts were hanged in Munſter, becauſe they were papiſts, and criminal diſſenters acquitted, or pardoned, in Ulſter, becauſe they were diſſenters. But never, ſure, was partiality more impolitic, ridiculous, or unjuſt!

Such, in brief, was the late proceedings againſt the rioters in Munſter; the preſent effects of which are a general panic ſpread not only through that province, but alſo through moſt other parts of this kingdom, which hitherto had enjoyed uninterrupted tranquility, for more than ſeventy years paſt. The *affected* fears of a few leading, deſigning, and but nominal, proteſtants have produced *real* terrors in all the ſincere, and well-meaning profeſſors of the eſtabliſhed religion. And as for the papiſts, ſo many of them are already hanged, in goal, or on the informer's liſts, that the greateſt part of the reſt have fled through fear; ſo that the land lies untilled for want of hands; and a famine will probably enſue. Such papiſts as have any thing to loſe, know not which way to turn themſelves: If they leave the country, their abſence will be conſtrued into a proof of their guilt: if they remain in it, they are in imminent danger of having their lives ſworn away by informers and approvers; for the ſuborning and corrupting of witneſſes on this occaſion is, my Lord, beyond conception, frequent and barefaced. The very ſtews have been raked, and the goals rummaged in ſearch of evidence; and the moſt notoriouſly profligate in both have been ſelected, and tampered with, to give information of the private tranſactions and deſigns of reputable men, with whom they never had the leaſt dealing, intercourſe, or acquaintance; nay, to whoſe very perſons they were found to be ſtrangers, when confronted at their trial.

But it is high time to put an end to this letter; and

and, therefore, my Lord, to the trouble I have already given you I ſhall only add this requeſt, that you will be pleaſed to communicate its contents to ſuch of your noble friends there, as have both the power and inclination to cauſe a ſpeedy, and effectual ſtop to be put to thoſe crying acts of injuſtice and cruelty, that are daily committed here; for, I am ſorry to acquaint your Lordſhip, that there is not the leaſt likelihood of any ſteps being taken, on this ſide of the water, towards ſo humane, and chriſtian a deſign.

I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's

Moſt obedient,

And moſt humble ſervant,

May 23, 1766.

L. T.

APPENDIX.

An enquiry into the cauſes of the outrages, committed by the Levellers, or White-Boys, in the province of Munſter, by M. S. Eſq. Taken from the Dublin Magazine, for April 1763.

Clamitant --denis in annum ſolidis animam et corpus æſtimari, hinc veſtem, victum, tuguria, *hinc ſævitiam dominorum et vacationes munerum redimi. At hercule verbera, et vulnera, duram hiemem, exercitas æſtates,* famen *atrocem, et ſterilem* laborem *ſempiterna.---Blæſus reſpondet.---Non per ſeditionem et turbas deſideria vulgi ad Cæſarem ferenda.*

Tac. Ann. L. 1.

AFTER an uninterrupted tranquility of ſeventy years, during which time this kingdom hath felt no aſſault from a foreign power, nor been ſhaken by domeſtic inſurrections, it is much to its diſhonour, that the appearance of rebellion ſhould be chargeable on any of its inhabitants: yet the miſdeeds of a few miſcreants have laid us open to ſuch a charge, many counties have ſuffered by their outrages, and the whole kingdom hath felt an alarm. Notwithſtanding the conſultations of government, the authority of the civil, and the interference of the military, power, joined to the puniſhments inflicted by our laws, theſe people (under the name of Levellers or White-Boys) have broke out again, to the deſtruction of peace and ſecurity in the counties they inhabit.

Why they have riſen, or why the means to ſuppreſs them, have proved ineffectual, no one has attempted to

lay

lay clearly before the public. It is hoped then, that the following enquiry, wherein we are all concerned, will not be unacceptable at this time. If the writer ſhould ſeem to extenuate the tranſgreſſions of this lawleſs crew, he begs the public may not miſtake him for their defender; for, to defend them he thinks unlawful and wicked, to exculpate them impoſſible, to utterly pardon them unſafe; but to enquire into the ſeeming motives of their actions, to trace whether wantonneſs and wickedneſs in them, or ſomething as bad in their ſuperiors, may not have been the joint cauſes of their outrages, he thinks an act of juſtice, and the moſt feaſible method of redreſſing the preſent evil.

When the firſt alarm of theſe people ſpread through the kingdom, the miſchiefs they committed were few, and their numbers not great. The ſufferers murmured, but did not exert themſelves. The magiſtrates were too indolent, or too timid, to ſuppreſs them. Thus the offenders increaſed their crimes and their numbers. Their firſt acts of violence were throwing down walls and ditches; thence they called themſelves Levellers. But when they felt their own ſtrength, and ſaw themſelves a multitude; when they found no methods taken to reſtrain them; they concluded government itſelf afraid; they changed their proceedings, they put on a ridiculous uniform, and took the new name of White-Boys, tore up the grounds of ſome, maimed the cattle of others, menaced many, terrified all, and at length forced themſelves into the notice of the legiſlature.

Theſe proceedings were undoubtedly formidable at that criſis, engaged as we were in a tedious, bloody, and expenſive war, againſt an enemy, who every year threatened to invade us. Men knew not what to think, and it is no wonder if many, of more loyalty than penetration, ſhould ſuſpect a rebellion. Many did, indeed, ſuſpect it; and ſome were ſo led away by the belief of it, as to aver it in the grand council

of

of the nation. Nay, at this very time there are not wanting many who give a full credit to it. If it was a rebellion, th. n never was any thing more ridiculouſly attempted, or could have been more eaſily ſuppreſſed; if it is one at preſent, never was any matter more untimely undertaken, or more likely to be ineffectual. But it is the intereſt of ſome people to give it that colour, leſt we ſhould find the origin of our diſturbances in their own miſconduct; and the overheated zeal of others is ready to join in any cry againſt papiſts. The writer of this Enquiry thinks both wrong, and hopes the nation will be ſatisfied, leſt, by miſtaking the cauſe of our diſorders, we may never be able to cure them. The perſons, and the time in which they appeared, have been the ſtrongeſt arguments urged for calling this riot a rebellion. The perſons were papiſts, and the violence broke out in a time of war. As papiſts, we know them hurried on by a blind religious zeal, and believe them, in general, as different from proteſtants in political as religious ſentiments. We are not quite miſtaken in this judgment of them; but we are often widely ſo in the conſequence we attempt to draw from it, 'That they are ever ripe for rebellion, and, if any opportunity offered, would maſſacre us in our beds.' Theſe charges are ſpecious, but are not humane, nor are they warranted by experience; nay, if they were true of ſome, cannot be ſo of all papiſts. There is often a ſpecies of fanaticiſm in politics, as well as in religion, and both are apt to precipitate us into very raſh opinions. Such enthuſiaſtic admirers of the glorious revolution, as have no other method of expreſſing their loyalty but by bumpers, of their religion but by railing at popery, may aſſert that no papiſt can be a peaceable ſubject; but all diſpaſſionate men, on mature reflection, will confeſs, that one man may differ from another in religious, yet agree in political ſentiments; and *vice verſa*. The hugonots in France are a living inſtance of the firſt, and many

of

of the clergy and laity at the time of the revolution, and in the reign of queen Anne, of the ſecond.

To aſſert, becauſe any people have once rebelled, that they will for ever rebel, or are always ripe for rebellion, is not juſt argument. There is no nation on earth but has been guilty of this crime at one period or another; are we therefore to conclude, that all nations will for ever rebel? But, it may be ſaid, the papiſts of Ireland, merely as papiſts, have rebelled oftener than other people; and from thence we may conclude their perpetual proneneſs to that horrid crime. If we candidly weigh this fact through the ſeveral periods of our hiſtory, we will find it otherwiſe. Before the reign of queen Elizabeth, when both kingdoms were of one religion, whatever diſturbances happened in Ireland were ſuch as have been in moſt other kingdoms, in England, in France, and in Scotland often. The rebellion which broke out in 1590, and which was fully ſuppreſſed by king James the firſt, aroſe from the oppreſſions of their governors no leſs than from religious principles, and was fomented by Philip of Spain. It is well known, that feuds on religious matters were frequent in England through all that century.

The horrid maſſacre and rebellion of 1641 was purely popiſh; but was doubtleſs encouraged by the troubled ſtate of England at that period. Scotland had ſet them the example of ſucceſsful rebellion, and the threats of the covenanters, with the promiſes of cardinal Richelieu, all conſpired to foment the black buſineſs.

The troubles in 1683 cannot be called a rebellion with any propriety, neither was it judged as ſuch, nor puniſhed as ſuch, by our glorious deliverer king William III. Since that time, Ireland is quite free from any charge of that kind, and probably will be ſo, from the impoſſibility of the like occaſions happening; for there muſt be a number of concurring circumſtances

ſtances to afford cauſe for any ſet of people to riſqu their all, in wicked purſuits and a fruitleſs proſpect.

Two ſeeming occaſions have offered, in 1715 and 1745, if the papiſts were able and willing to oppoſe the government. In 1590 and 1641, the papiſts were very numerous, poſſeſſed of large properties, and ſharers in the government; in 1688 they had the pretext of aiding their popiſh king; but in 1715 their powers were broken, their numbers decreaſed, their properties conſiderably leſſened, and all places of truſt in the hands of the proteſtants, already grown vaſtly numerous. As they did not then riſe, much leſs could they attempt it in 1745, when their numbers and poſſeſſions were much more diminiſhed, and the hands of proteſtants ſo much more ſtrengthened. Who then can ſuſpect they would attempt in 1762, what they dared not to do in 1715 and 1745, when every circumſtance was more favourably inviting? Allow them never ſo wrong in religious matters, they muſt be diveſted of all human prudence to have made ſuch an attempt in 1762. But the tumult this year ſets the matter in a yet clearer light; for, though they might have expected a foreign aid in 1762, no one is ſo abſurd as to conclude they expect it now when peace is concluded through all Europe. That many, nay moſt, papiſts may wiſh a revolution is very poſſible, but there is great difference between what men would wiſh done, and what they would attempt to do. Many would partake of the emoluments attending a change, that from fear, nay from probity and humanity, would not become the inſtruments of effecting it.

But if diſaffection was not the cauſe, what elſe could raiſe a tumult to the likeneſs of a rebellion? There is one cauſe which is a ſcandal to many, a cauſe which might put weapons into the hands of cowards, and make even the loyal rebellious. Is it *poverty the reſult of oppreſſion.* Not the oppreſſion of kings or governors, not the oppreſſion of taxes, but the oppreſſion

of

of landholders, mercileſs landholders, who ſeek but one likeneſs of our firſt parent, to be lords of a country with no inhabitants but beaſts.

It has ſcarce ever happend that a mob roſe without cauſe; but no mob ever knew where to ſtop. The preſent rioters have repeatedly declared the cauſe of their outrages. In all their letters, whether menacing or expoſtulatory, they demand a redreſs of grievances, and urge thoſe grievances as the cauſe of their diſturbances. Like other mobs they have carried their complaints to a violent exceſs, and have injured the innocent as well as the oppreſſors. The landholders who complain of their violence may juſtly aſk, "who made them carvers for themſelves? ſhall "they pretend to command thoſe they ſhould obey? "ſhall they deſtroy my property if I will not give "it to them on their own conditions?". All ſenſible men will anſwer. no---But, as they aſk, will they alſo anſwer, a few reaſonable queſtions? Are the poor of Munſter oppreſſed? Can they live on the ſmall wages they have from the landholders with the high rents they pay to them? Are a number of wretches to be ſtarved to make one greater wretch opulent and luxurious? Is it no oppreſſion to lay waſte the whole ſide of a country, and ſend the inhabitants a begging? ———Theſe are facts ſo notorious, that many landholders in Munſter muſt have impudence equal to their tyranny, if they attempt to deny them. It is ſuch conduct that has given cauſe to ſome, and a pretence to others, for diſturbing the peace of ſociety; and it is the conciouſneſs of this conduct, that made many ſo remiſs in detecting the diſturbers of the public peace.

Theſe rioters ſeem to aſſign three cauſes for their nocturnal miſchiefs, viz. the encloſing commons, the extravagant rent for potatoe ground, and the exhorbitance of tythe-mongers. Each of which we ſhall beg leave to examine.

The

The country people of Ireland are, in general, under a great miſtake about their rights of commonage; many look upon them as royal grants for the benefit of the poor, others think them appendages to the neighbouring eſtates (as they are) but from long preſcription conclude them unalienable from the occupiers of the adjacent lands. At the time of the Down ſurvey, all arable and real paſture lands were ſubject to taxes; and where there were large tracts of unreclaimed grounds, they were eſtimated in quantity for quality, and left frequently in common between the neighbouring eſtates. The proprietors of thoſe eſtates, though they yielded a right of grazing upon the commons to all their tenants on the borders, undoubtedly had a right to encloſe and occupy thoſe grounds at any time, as well as any other part of their lands. So that the outcry of the levellers againſt the encloſing of commons is an open outrage on the properties of their landlords. Yet there are ſome caſes wherein they have a juſt foundation for their outcry. Some landlords in Munſter have ſet their lands to cottiers far above their value, and, to lighen the burthen, allowed commonage to their tenants as a kind of recompence. Afterwards, in deſpite of all equity, contrary to all compacts, the landlords have encloſed thoſe commons, and precluded the unhappy tenants from the only means of making their bargains tolerable. The law, indeed is open to redreſs them; but they do not know the laws, or how to proceed; and, if they did know them, they are not equal to the expence of a ſuit againſt a rich tyrant; for it is as melancholy as true, that in Munſter the barbarous policy is adopted of keeping their tenants poor to ſecure their ſlaviſh obedience. Beſides, the greateſt part of theſe tenures are by verbal agreement, not by written compact: here is another difficulty, if the wretches ſhould apply to law. What can they do in this caſe, ſtarved if they ſubmit, unequal to a lawſuit, or forced to fly as beggars to

other

other counties? They were too ignorant of the principles of equity to ſeek a reaſonable redreſs, they had too deep a ſenſe of their ſufferings to feel the leſs pungent call of virtue; nay, they thought equity of their ſide, and iniquity on the part of their landlords; and thence flew with eagerneſs to, what is ever the reſource of low and uncultivated minds, *violence*. They thought by annoying their tyrants to get a remiſſion of tyranny. Many, perhaps, will diſbelieve any ſuch inſtance of oppreſſion as I have mentioned to exiſt in our country; but it does exiſt; and was the writer of this diſpoſed to be particular in a cauſe that is general, or to quit public ſpirit for private injuries, he could point out ſome of the earlieſt compl.ints on the opening of this riot, as the primary anthors of the whole diſturbance.

Let there be added here another inconteſtible crying evil, which not only affects the poor individuals in the counties where it is perpetrated, but which injures the whole community, fruſtrates the good intentions of government, oppoſes poſitive laws, and threatens deſolation to almoſt an whole province. Many perſons have taken a vaſt extent of land which they occupy themſelves, the old inhabitauts are caſt out, their cottages levelled, their gardens turned to paſture; and, inſtead of populous villages, you may now travel through a waſte of country, without ſeeing the human face divine. "Begone ye old tillers, ſays the greedy monopolizer, this ſoil is too rich for men," and ſo he leaves no man upon it but his wretched herdſmen. What then ſhall theſe exiles do? work they cannot, for there is no work for them; to beg, they are aſhamed. Shall they ſtarve? no, they may remove to diſtant countries. But in what condition are they to remove? a ſingle perſon might, perhaps, change the place of his abode with ſmall inconveniency; but here are whole families, breeding wives, and infant children, without wealth, without property, depending on their daily labour for their

daily

daily bread. How ſhall they convey their little houſhold ſtuff, if they have any? half their little ſtock muſt be ſold to enable them to remove the other half, and then what recommendation do they bring with them to a ſtrange country? their very removal carries a ſuſpicion of miſconduct in their native place; grant that ſuſpicion conquered, who will entruſt them with land? they have no property, have the appearance of vagrants ready to change their place every month; and thus their being diſpoſſeſſed of one habitation, becomes a ſtrong reaſon for denying them another.

Here is an evil more ſevere, and much more extenſive than the inſtance given about commons; in that inſtance, they might have land, but at an exorbitant rate; here they are excluded from having land at any rate.

The love of our country is allowed a natural and noble principle, though the lower claſs of men are not capable of it in a more enlarged degree; yet they have certain local affections, which are as dear to them, and give them as high ſenſations, as the moſt patriot breaſt ever felt; and all theſe ſenſations riſe to heighten their diſtreſs. Burthened with oppreſſion, environed with want, forced to fly from the ſcene of his nativity and youthful pleaſures, to quit the ſmall ſpot he had expended his labours upon, what man of the dulleſt feelings would not acknowledge to be the height of accumulated miſery? If ſuch an effect was produced by a foreign power we would all recognize a propriety in our feelings. But where is the difference to the ſufferer, whether his misfortunes are cauſed by a foreign or domeſtic foe, by an inſolent enemy, or an oppreſſive landlord? In one caſe, we call it glorious to reſiſt, talk of love to our country, our altars, and hearths; but, in the other, we muſt ſubmit and ſtarve, for even the laws afford us no redreſs. The landlord will diſpoſe of his own as he likes beſt. But with all due reſpect to thoſe land-

lords and landholders, do they think the whole country made for them alone, and that providence has no regard to the cries of the poor? Admit them to oppreſs their vaſſals with impunity, why ſhould they hurt the community at large, which they do moſt manifeſtly? If the number of induſtrious poor make the wealth of a nation, the number of monopolizing graziers muſt bring it to poverty! If we caſt our eyes on the ſtate of Munſter for theſe twenty years paſt, we will ſee the ill effects of this ſpirit of exorbitant land-taking.

In the year 1744, the number of houſes in Munſter was 118,089, in 1748 they were reduced to 102, 198, and in the year 1760 they amounted to but 114, 704, of which number upwards of two thouſand were an increaſe in the three cities of Cork, Limerick and Waterford. The country of Cork had two thouſand houſes leſs than it had in the year 1744, the county of Waterford above one thouſand, notwithſtanding the increaſe of their cities. Are theſe marks of a thriveing country, untouched by ſickneſs or famine, upwards of twenty years? We know likewiſe that there were near two thouſand manufactures, from the north, planted in different parts of Munſter during that period, that there have been numberleſs acres of land reclaimed, which might afford ſuſtenance to a greater number of families than the decreaſe in theſe twenty years.

The only ſhadow of apology for this decreaſe of inhabitants is a long war; but if this plea was juſt, it muſt affect the whole kingdom, Ulſter particularly, and yet they have not found this inconvenience. Ulſter, notwithſtanding its conſtant drains to ſupply our armies abroad, and our linen manufactures in ſeveral parts of the kingdom, has increaſed upwards of 17,000 houſes ſince 1748; and Leinſter about 12,000 in the ſame period. Even Conaught, though abounding in ſheep-walks, has increaſed 8,000. Munſter alone is depopulated, and inſtead of an addition of 10,000 houſes,

houſes, its due proportion with the other provinces, it is 4,000 ſhort, that is a difference of 10,000 inhabitants loſt. Look upon this, you *Nimrods* of Munſter, who make men your chaſe, and beaſts your companions! While you are eſtabliſhing yourſelves, you are undoing your country, and fruſtrating the wiſe endeavours of our governors. Though the laws command, you will not till, nor ſuffer tillers to remain among you, Nay, theſe landholders, for I would diſtinguiſh them from their landlords (though many of both are the beſt and moſt ſenſible ornaments of the kingdom) theſe landholders, I ſay, ſtop the growth of proteſtantiſm amongſt us; they keep their tenants poor to keep them ſlaves, they bow down their minds with their bodies, they ſuffer no light to one, nor comfort to the other, it is their intereſt to keep them papiſts, and the creatures themſelves have no underſtanding nor worldly intereſt to become proteſtants. Every ſenſible man knows that popery is a religion that countenances ſlavery as proteſtantiſm does freedom. It would be the ruin then of theſe tyrants to encourage a reformation, or ſuffer any degree of property among their vaſſals; ſo that, whilſt they are complaining of the loſſes ſuſtained by the outrage of the preſent rioters, they are bringing a more vital loſs on the community, by baniſhing its members, and diſcouraging proteſtants.

To have a more perfect view of theſe perſons' proceedings, let us conſider the ſecond and moſt common complaint of the rioters, the price of land for potatoes.

It is not uncommon in Munſter to charge from four to five guineas per acre for potatoe ground; but we ſhall ſuppoſe the price but four guineas, that is 91 ſhillings. The daily wages for labourers is four pence per day; there are 365 days in the year, of which there are 52 ſundays, and ſuppoſe but 13 holidays, the remainder is 300 working days, the wages for which are 100 ſhillings, that is nine ſhillings above the price of their land, of which five ſhillings are paid for tythe, and two for hearth-money, and the remaining two go towards

the rent of their cabbin. What is left? Nothing—and out of this nothing they are to buy ſeed for their garden, ſalt for their potatoes, rags for their wives and children, a little firing to prevent the crudities of their food, a few ruſhes to give a gleam of light to their wretchedneſs; they muſt likewiſe purchaſe labourers to till their garden, pay a ſhilling per ann. to the prieſt, and reſerve a few pence to regale them at the patron. It muſt be obſerved, that in this calculation I have mentioned 300 working days, though it is known from the greater number of holidays obſerved in that part of the kingdom than any other, from the number of wet and broken days, joined to the natural lazineſs of the people, there are not above 200 days for which they are paid. What an aggravation does this make in the account? and will the beſt crop of potatoes enable them to maintain a family often of ſix or eight perſons, under the difficulties we have mentioned.

It is this exorbitant rent which produces the third cauſe of complaint of tythes. Ready money they have not; for where can they get it? The reward of their labour goes in payment of their rent; they can ſeldom amaſs the mighty ſum of two ſhillings to pay their hearth-money; the collector muſt diſtrain in general before they can compaſs it by loan or intreaty. How then ſhall they collect five ſhillings for tythe? Tythes they would not love were they able to pay them, but they hate them doubly from their poverty. The clergymen in that country poſſeſs livings of vaſt extent and little emolument; there are ſome livings which have 1000 acres under black cattle; here the incumbent gets nothing, and the cottiers gardens become his principal ſupport; and a gentleman of birth, perhaps piety and learning, is brought to the diſagreeable neceſſity of chaffering with a ſet of poor wretches for two pence or ſix pence in a bargain, or forego the ſupport of his own family. This buſineſs grows irkſome to him, and he ſeeks ſome one perſon who will take the trouble upon him. The diſtreſs of the pariſhioner is heightened

by

by this agreement; and the tythe-monger, who is generally more rapacious than humane, ſqueezes out the very vitals of the people; and by proceſs, citation, and ſequeſteration, drags from them the little which the landlord and king had left them.

Theſe are the real and apparent cauſes of the levellers conduct; in all their circular letters they have deſired a redreſs of theſe grievances, and in the ſmall compaſs of my reading I find no nation, that has not had tumults from ſuch or like cauſes without religion coming into the queſtion. But theſe creatures are papiſts; no wonder, for all the poor of that country are ſuch. There are prieſts among them. Men whoſe buſineſs is peace ſhould be puniſhed for promoting diſturbances undoubtedly: But they alſo are among the ſufferers; very many of thoſe prieſts who had villages with an hundred or two of cottages upon them, which paid them ſix-pence or a ſhilling a year each, are now deſerted, and their poor ſtipends dwindled to nothing. I do not mean this as an excuſe for them, who ought to heal and not ſow diſſentions; but merely to ſhew there are other cauſes than religion for theſe tumults. The ſame was my intention with regard to the *levellers*. No man is innocent who diſturbs the peace of ſociety; and no man ſhould do it with impunity; but there is a gradation in guilt, and juſtice will not call the man, who raſhly ſnatches a weapon to defend himſelf or puniſh an agreſſor, equally criminal with him, who ſhews a deliberate ſettled purpoſe of murder or rebellion. That theſe riots have not been yet quelled is due to the timidity of the civil magiſtrates, joined to a continuation of the oppreſſion, as we might clearly ſhew, did we not haſten to conclude an enquiry already too long. Only be it obſerved at preſent, that the lenity of government, which many have dared to blame, aroſe partly from their knowledge of the real ſituation of that country: and that, whether mildneſs or ſeverity is adopted in the proſecution of theſe lawleſs fellows, it will only ſpread a film over the ſore, but not cure it;

pardoning them is but reſtoring them to the hands of their tyrants; hanging is an alternative for ſtarving; tranſporting them, indeed, though it robs the community of able hands, may be deſirable to themſelves, as they may become happier in a foreign country, but ſcarce can be more wretched than they are in their own.

Some among them, indeed, deſerve the utmoſt puniſhment of the laws, I mean ſuch, as, without any provocation from the cauſes before aſſigned, have joined theſe wretches, and made uſe of their hands to wreak their private malice on their neighbours. Many ſuch there are, which, it is hoped, the laws will overtake.

If this addreſs is approved, or ſuppoſed to touch the matter juſtly, the author, perhaps, will add ſuch thoughts as may help to a complete redreſs of the preſent diſturbances. What has been here ſaid is purely for public good, dictated by a proteſtant heart, and written by one who is far removed from the preſent ſcene of tumult, but not from the feelings which ought to actuate every member of ſociety.

Notes taken on the Trial of Edward Meighan, for the Murder of John Bridge, on the Night of the 28th of October 1764, by a Gentleman of the Jury; conſiſting of Anſwers made to the ſeveral Queſtions put to the Witneſſes.

From EXSHAW's MAGAZINE, for JUNE, 1760.

JOHN TOOHY, SWORN FOR THE CROWN.

KNOWS the Priſoner,—knew John Bridge—he is dead, was killed by Edward Meighan—by a ſtroke of a bill-hook on the head at Shanbally, and died inſtantly—went to Engliſh's houſe at Shanbally, with Pierce Byrn, James Buxton, James Farrell, Silveſter How, Darby Tierney; knew not for what purpoſe,—ſaw John Walſh, Dennis Coleman, Peter Magrath and John Bridge, playing cards at Engliſh's houſe,—went a ſmall way out of the houſe, on James Farrell's call, into a field,—ſaw many people in the field; to wit, Edward Meighan the priſoner, Nicholas Sheehy, Edward Prendergaſt, Thomas Beere, John Burke, Edward Burke, Thomas Magrath, Hugh Hayes, Roger Sheehy, Dennis Coleman, William Flyn, Edmund Sheehy, Edward Coffee, James Coghlan, John Walſh, Philip Magrath, Thomas Harman, John Butler, and many others drawn up in a rank, as if to be reckoned.——John Bridge and company went towards the people, and join'd them.——Nicholas Sheehy tendered an oath to John Bridge to deny examinations; who refuſed to take it: On this refuſal Pierce Byrn ſtruck at him with a ſlane, which he defended with his left-hand; then the priſoner drew a bill-hook from under a belt, and ſtruck Bridge on the head, which to his recollection, clove the ſkull,—Bridge fell down dead inſtantly.

The ſame Perſons in about half an hour, got a blanket, and carried the corpſe, to a field belonging to Connor's ſon, or Roſs, at Ballyhuſkin, and buried him in a ploughed field, about two miles from the place of committing the murder.

An oath was then tendered by Nicholas Sheehy, to all preſent, not to diſcloſe what had paſſed that night, and to be true to the king of France, and Joan Meſkill and Children, which moſt, or all of them did.——The priſoner took the oath,—all approved of what happened,—that as John Bridge was out of the way, Michael Guinan's teſtimony could not take effect.——The field is called the Barn-field,—knows not what was done with the body ſince,---heard the priſoner ſay that the corpſe was taken up and removed,---knows of a letter brought to James Buxton by John Doherty, which was wrote by Nicholas Sheehy.

At the time of burying the corpſe in the field, a little boy was found hiding in the ditch, and put up behind Nicholas Sheehy. The boy's name John Londergan,---believes he could not ſee him killed, or where he was buried, but could ſee the people carrying the body.

CROSS EXAMINED.

Came from Killcrow,—has been in goal for about four months;—was ſent to goal the 20th of September—firſt gave examinations againſt the priſoner, about a month after committal,—was committed for horſe-ſtealing,—believes the 28th of October 1764, was Tueſday, but cannot recollect,—knew not of any rewards to be given by government,—remembers Clogheen fair in October 1764, but not the day,—Bridge was killed about ten or eleven at night,—knows not whether before or after the fair of Clogheen,—lived for a week before the murder with James Buxton, and returned to the ſame place,—lived with James Buxton for three years before and after.——Was employed to carry meſſages and letters to and

froin

from the White boys,—knows not whether the houſe belong'd to Engliſh; but it was named for his,—never was there after the murder,—believes there were above an hundred preſent when the murder was committed,—ſays the ſeveral people already named were preſent,—ſays there is a dwelling-houſe in the field where Bridge was buried,—in his evidence in Dublin, he ſaid the houſe was within a muſket-ſhot of the place of burial,—knew the priſoners by ſeeing them at ſeveral meetings of the White boys, gave in examinations againſt the White boys in about a month after committal, and after the murder, a ſhort time before he went to Dublin.

JOHN LONDERGAN, SWORN FOR THE CROWN.

Knows the priſoner,—ſaw him in October 1764, between Mr. Callaghan's and father Sheehy's;—ſaw ſeveral in company with the priſoner; to wit, Thomas Magrath, John Butler, Nicholas Sheehy, and many others, in the high-road to Shanbally; that when he firſt ſaw them, he ſlipt into a trench, being afraid of his life,—was diſcovered in the trench by Thomas Magrath, and taken out, and aſked his buſineſs,—they then put him behind Nicholas Sheehy,—he ſaw them carry a corpſe rolled up in a caddow,—ſaw the head bloody on the ſide of the horſe next to him,—was not carried far before he was put from behind Sheehy,—knew John Bridge, but did not know whether he was the corpſe.

They deſired this evidence to go home another ſhort road, and Nicholas Sheehy gave him three half crowns, and deſired him not to talk of what he ſaw, or to betray his uncle, Michael Guinan,—is not very certain of the time of the murder of Bridge; but heard he was murdered,—believes it was about the firſt of November was two years.

He was ſent by his uncle Michael Guinan, to John Bridge for a Piſtole or Guinea,—does not recollect when, but it was on the ſame night that he ſaw the corpſe, but did not go all the way, on account of

hearing

hearing the crowd, ſome on foot, and ſome on horſe-back.

Heard that Bridge was killed on the ſame night, very ſoon after.

When he was taken from behind Nicholas Sheehy, the priſoner ſhewed him a ſhort cut to the town of Clogheen, and deſired him not to follow the corpſe, but to go home the ſhort way,—believes there were a hundred there,—there were alſo preſent Buck Farrell, and James Farrell.

CROSS EXAMINED.

Saw the corpſe after midnight. It was neither very dark, nor very light;—the days were not long, but rather ſhort,—believes it was Sunday night, becauſe he ſaw people going to maſs,—knows not how long it was before Chriſtmas,—it was three weeks before Chriſtmas,—people go to maſs on holydays as well as Sundays, therefore it might be an holyday,—he did not know the length of a week.

MARY BRADY, SWORN FOR THE CROWN.

She lived with her mother in Clogheen, in October, 1764, Michael Kearney was in her houſe in October, 1764, and was called upon by Nicholas Sheehy,—ſhe was preſent. Nicholas Sheehy ſaid Kearney was to go with him that night,—ſhe followed them to Shanbally,—ſaw a man, wrapped in a blanket, dead. She then, and there ſaw Nicholas Sheehy; the priſoner, Edmond Sheehy, Thomas Magrath, and ſeveral others,—there were about an hundred. She firſt ſaw the body at Shanbally. They buried the body at Ballyhuskin, on the lands called the Barn,—was not preſent at the burial,—ſhe ſaw a bill-hook in the priſoner's hand, the priſoner made an attempt to ſtrike the corpſe, when in the blanket, and ſaid that what had been done was very right; and it was a pity, but to uſe all whores and rogues in like manner,—ſhe obſerved the bill-hook bloody,—they left Shanbally ſhortly before ſhe followed them.

She

She recollects no other words of the priſoner,---in about eight days, the corpſe was taken up, and buried at Ballyſheehan, near Shanbally.

Says ſhe was ſent by Nicholas Sheehy to the priſoner; that he was to go on command; and he ſaid he would obey,--ſays ſhe watched the party, and followed them from Clogheen to Ballyhuſkin Barn,---was deſired by Nicholas Sheehy and Edmond Sheehy, alias Buck Sheehy, to ſtay at the end of the road, and not to go farther, and by the priſoner. She ſaw them bring the corpſe in the ſame way as before, from Ballyhuſkin to Ballyſheehan, it was carried by turns; about an hundred preſent,---followed the corpſe moſt of the road to Ballyſheehan,---they ſaid they would bury it in the church-yard there.

NICHOLAS SHEEHY tendered an oath, at the firſt and ſecond burial, on the croſs, to be true to each other, and never to diſcover,---the priſoner was ſworn on the croſs at both burials,---ſhe heard the priſoner ſay it was John Bridge.

CROSS EXAMINED.

She remembers it was in October,---knows not when the fair of Clogheen is held,---ſays it was four Days before Lieut. Chaloner went to Clogheen, ſhe went after Michael Kearney, by whom ſhe had a child, to Ballyhuſkin,---Kearney had no certain reſidence, but was at her mother's houſe the night Sheehy called on him.

The men were gathered about nine o'clock,---ſays Michael Kearney was there preſent at the burial,---there were many other women there,---ſhe was admitted, as Michael Kearney was ſuch as they imagined.---Kearney ſwore her,---there were ſome Clogheen women there,---ſhe ſaw none prevented,---Ballyhuſkin how far from Shanbally, or Ballyſheehan? ſhe knows not; but above three miles,---all dreſſed as uſual, neither light nor dark,--did not go the high-road.

GREGORY

GREGORY FLANNERY, SWORN FOR THE PRISONERS.

He knew Michael Kearney,---lived in Clogheen,---saw him April, 1763, in Dublin,---he went to borrow money from counſellor O'Callaghan; and if he could not get it, to quit the country,---he gave the witneſs 60 l. in caſh, who got a bill for 58 l. 12 s. 4 d, and left two letters, ſaw him go aboard a ſhip bound for Briſtol or Parkgate, ſaw the ſhip ſail below the wall,---wrote to the witneſs about ſome things, in about two months after,---never heard of him ſince he left the kingdom, about the 22d or 23d of April, 1763.

CROSS EXAMINED.

He might have returned ſince without his knowledge,---he lived in Dublin ten years, but never reſided in the county of Tipperary.

THOMAS GORMAN, SWORN FOR THE PRISONERS.

Knew Michael Kearney twenty years,—ſaw him in February or March, 1763—heard Michael Kearney went abroad, and received a letter from him, dated 7th of May, 1763, from London: received ſeveral other letters till September or October, 1763, when he ſaid he was going to Jamaica,—often ſaw him when in the country, and believes if he had returned, he would have ſeen him.

HENRY KEATING, SWORN.

Knew Michael Kearney, in Jamaica, the beginning of March 1764,—ſaw him firſt there in December, 1763,--he was in very good health,—then did not think of returning,--witneſs returned in Auguſt, 1764,—left Jamaica in April, 1764,—made ſome ſtay in London,—has been in Clonmell ſince,—believes he would have ſeen Kearney if he returned,—It was Michael Kearney of Clogheen.

CROSS EXAMINED.

Knew the county of Tipperary 16 years,---heard there was another Michael Kearney.

DENNIS

DENNIS MAGRATH, SWORN.

Lives at Clogheen ſince he was born,---knew Michael Kearney left Clogheen the 15th of April 1763,---he wa the ſame Michael Kearney that kept Mary Brady.

CROSS EXAMINED.

Witneſs, a brother to Thomas Magrath, a priſoner,---ſays Michael Kearney ſet off for Dublin the 15th of April, 1763,---he received a letter in ſix or eight days from Dublin,---he received letters from London the May following,---he is ſure Kearney did not return after he firſt went off.

DANIEL KEEFE, SWORN FOR THE PRISONERS.

Lived in Clogheen fifteen years,—knew Michael Kearney,—ſaw him laſt, three years ago, next April,---knew him ſince 1752,—heard he was in Jamaica,---quitted on account of money due,---ſure if he was in Clogheen he muſt have ſeen him, unleſs he kept his room,---he had a child by Mary Brady.

ANN HULLAN, SWORN FOR THE PRISONER.

Remebers the fair of Clogheen, 1764,---knows Mary Brady,---her daughter Mary Brady, lived with the witneſs in October, 1764,---the fair is in October,---ſhe lived with her Mother,--ſhe was at the fair,---lay at her own houſe the night before the fair,---lay for two nights before the fair with her two daughters, Mary Brady one of the daughters, Eleanor Dunlea the other,---lay in her own houſe, with her two daughters in one bed,---ſhe and her daughter went to bed about eight or nine o'clock, two nights before the fair,---Mary Brady remained the whole night in bed, for the three nights,---could not be out of bed, without her knowing of it,---knows not whether Mary Brady be married,---ſhe is not to be believed on her oath, three years next Eaſter, ſince Michael Kearney left Clogheen,---he was not at her houſe at any time in 1764,---no one in company with her daughter, but what ſhe was preſent with.

ELEANOR

ELEANOR DUNLEA, SWORN FOR THE PRISONERS.

Knows Mary Brady,---the fair in Clogheen before All-holland-tide,---a fair there every year in October, ---lay the fair night in the bed with Mary Brady and her mother, and the night before, and the night before that, and the night after the fair,---went to bed about seven,---all went to bed together,---has known Michael Kearney---does not remember his ever spending an hour in her house,---it was usual with the family to go to bed early.

JOHN HENDERKIN, SWORN FOR THE PNISONERS.

Knows Edward Meighan the prisoner,---the fair of Clogheen the 28th of October, 1764, was on a Monday,---witness lives in Carrick,---came to Clogheen,--spent the night before the fair in the prisoner's house, to which he went as being his friend,---prisoner keeps a free house in Clogheen,---came to his house about five in the evening of the 28th,---prisoner was at home before him, and remained with him all the evening,---they went to bed about eight or nine o'clock,---the prisoner was in the house when the witness went to bed,---the prisoner did not go to bed all night, as the fair-day was to be next day, and he had work to finish for the fair,---he, and a journeyman, were at work in the same room where witness lay, who awoke several times, and still found them at work,---lay awake about half an hour, and spoke to Meighan about working,---did not go to sleep before ten: at which time Meighan, the prisoner, was in the room.

CROSS EXAMINED.

Meighan, the prisoner, is married to witnesses's sister---came from Carrick to Clogheen about five in the evening, where he found the prisoner, his wife, a journeyman and maid,---prisoner sitting in the kitchen with man and maid,---witness got cold meat in prisoner's house,---did not speak to the journeyman since he came to town,---an entry between the shop and kitchen,---worked usually in a bed-chamber, and

not

not in the ſhop,---they began to work after night-fall ---no other perſon lay in the room without,---the witneſs did not ſleep before ten,---did not ſleep an hour together all night,---ſaid the priſoner could not go out unknown to him,---he ſlept an hour together,---does not think it poſſible for the priſoner to go out unknown to him,---the priſoner, and his journeyman, were at work when he got up in the morning,---witneſs after the fair lay with the priſoner in the ſame bed,---priſoner and he went to bed together that night about ten,---Meighan and he lay poſitively together all that night,—heard the priſoner was charged with the murder of John Bridge, about a month ago,—never applied to for his evidence by any one,—knows not who told him of the murder,---did not hear when the murder was committed,---came voluntarily to give his evidence,---heard the morning of the fair that John Bridge fled out of the country,---never heard that he was murdered but by common fame,---had no converſation with the priſoner ſince he came to town, or ſince he was committed,---is a nailor by trade.

JOHN TOOHY, produced a ſecond time by Counſellor Hughes.

Knows the priſoner was preſent,---ſays there was John Butler, and Thomas Magrath, both of Clogheen, preſent.

EDMOND CALLAGHAN, FOR THE PRISONER.

Knows Shanbally,---knew it in October, 1764, and lived there 17 years,---no one of the name of Engliſh in Shanbally ſince he knew it.

CROSS EXAMINED.

Knows Glyn Callaghan,---ſome Engliſh live above Glyn Callaghan, on a purchaſe made by Counſellor Callaghan, and joins Shanbally,---where Engliſh lives is about one eighth of a mile from Shanbally.

DANIEL KEEFE, produced a ſecond time.

Knows John Butler, ſaw him in October 1764,--did not ſee him the 28th or 29th of October, 1764.

GERALD

GERALD FITZGERALD, SWORN FOR THE PRISONER.

Knows John Butler, ſaw him in October, 1764,---in a fever at his own houſe, from the third to the end of the month,---cannot ſay he ſaw him the 28th,---ſaw him in November the 2d before he was able to go out.

RICHARD TRAVERS, SWORN.

Knew Thomas Magrath in October, 1764,---ſaw him the 28th at the witneſs's father's houſe,---and from about eight at night till four o'clock in the morning on Sunday,---was drinking all the time in the company, --knows not whether he went out,---did not ſtay out an hour at a time,---knows not where Engliſh lives,---Shanbally about four miles from Clogheen.

JOHN BRIEN, SWORN.

Lives at Shanbally, is a dancing-maſter,---knew John Bridge,---believes him alive, never ſaw him ſince the 24th of October, 1764, nor was he in the country ſince,---met him in a forge the 24th at Barncourt,---called for the ſledge, and turned ſome ſhoes,---called witneſs aſide, and deſired that he would keep what he told him ſecret, for that he was going out of the kingdom; and that if he returned, he would return his favour.

LAURENCE HANGLIN, SWORN.

Knew John Bridge,---ſaw him at Angleſborough in the county of Limerick, 28th of October, 1764, about eleven miles from Clogheen,---was ſurpriſed at his knocking at his door three hours before day.--he ſaid he was going to ſea to avoid the light-horſe:---Went with him through Mitchelſtown;---parted from him beyond the town, and took leave of him beyond it,---he could read and write, but he never wrote to him, or to any one, that he could hear,---told him he would go to Corke or Kinſale, to look for a ſhip,---believes Mr. Beere is to be believed on his oath.

JOHN LANDREGAN, SWORN.

Worked all Saturday night; worked Sunday night, till five or ſix o'clock on Monday morning,---begun to work about ſix, Sunday evening,---did not go to bed,

bed, or to ſleep, all night,---witneſs went to prepare a ſtand,---in witneſs's company all night with his wife, maid, and Henderkin, all there,---Henderkin went to bed in the work-room above ſtairs.

CROSS EXAMINED.

Did not ſleep from Saturday to Monday,---lay on Monday night at his father's houſe,---Henderkin went away on Tueſday,---ſaw Henderkin a fortnight ago,---did not ſee him this day or yeſterday,---did not hear what he ſwore.

A circumſtantial Account of the Trial of Nicholas Sheehy, &c. for the Murder of John Bridge; taken from Exſhaw's Magazine for March, 1766.

THE accounts in the public papers relative to Sheehy's trial, condemnation, and execution are true; although they are not ſet forth in regular order, by what we can learn from ſeveral who attended the trial, which laſted about five hours. There were three witneſſes only examined in behalf of the crown, Mary Dunlary, Thomas Toohy, and John Lonergan; the former had been often with the White-boys in their nightly excurſions; the ſecond, Toohy, was a meſſenger, or runner upon all occaſions, for theſe people, and perfectly knew their motions and intentions: Theſe two witneſſes ſwore poſitively and peremptorily, that on the 28th of October, 1764, they were aſſembled in a large body, upon ſome lands, within a mile of the village of Clogheen, in the county of Tipperary, at night-time, when John Bridge, the unhappy deceaſed, was ſent for at a public-houſe in Clogheen, where he had been playing cards; that, when he came to the place where the White-boys were aſſembled, they expoſtulated with him upon the ſubject of giving in, and ſwearing examinations or informations, againſt many of them; and urged him to retract

or contradict what he had already ſworn; but the deceaſed reſolutely told them he would ſtick to what he had already given information of; which anſwer irritated them ſo much, that one perſon, with a ſlane (an inſtrument uſed in cutting turf) made a ſtroke at the deceaſed's head, which he warded off with his arm, whereupon Meehan, who was hanged with the prieſt, came behind the deceaſed, and, with a bill-hook, gave him but one ſtroke, and cleft his ſkull in ſuch a manner that he dropped dead, or, as the witneſs ſay, did not bring life with him to the ground. The prieſt was not preſent, or did not ſee this tranſaction, but was in the company, and immediately came up and approved of what was done, by ſaying it was well done; that every informer, and an informer who was an enemy to the French king, ought to be ſerved ſo; and ordered the body to be wrapped up in an old blanket, which was done, and thrown acroſs a horſe before one of the White-boys, when they all together (in number about 300) went to bury the corpſe in an open field, within a mile where the fact was committed. John Lonergan, the third witneſs (a boy about nineteen years old) ſwore that he knew the deceaſed, and the priſoners, very well; that on the night aforeſaid, he had been ſent by an uncle of his, one Guinan (who had likewiſe given information againſt the White-boys, and, as fame ſays, has been ſince poiſoned by them) to the houſe of one Engliſh, who lived upon the lands of Shanbally, belonging to Mr. Callaghan, for a piſtol; who, upon his return, heard a great number of people upon the road, and when he ſaw them, he threw himſelf into a ditch, not caring to be ſeen by them; but it happened that one of the company (who is now a priſoner) ſpyed him in the ditch, and ordered him out. The prieſt then enquired who he was? and where he was going, or had been? in which he ſatisfied him; whereupon the prieſt got the boy mounted behind him, and carried him to the turn of another road at ſome diſtance, and bid him go home, and gave him three half crowns;

deſiring

deſiring him, at the ſame time, 'Not to tell any body of what he ſaw.' During the boy's riding behind the prieſt, he ſaw the corpſe, with its head out of the caddow; and although the head was almoſt ſplit in two, and all bloody, he knew it to be that of the deceaſed John Bridge.

No witneſſes ever appeared more concurrent in their teſtimony; no prevarication, no contradiction, as fair a trial as ever criminals had. - Sheehy examined twelve witneſſes, which proved very unfavourable to him, as they coroborated, and ſtrengthened the teſtimony given in behalf of the crown. They endeavoured to prove an *alibi* *, in which they failed; and, that no credit was to be given to the witneſſes for the crown, one being a whore, and Toohy a rogue, and Lonergan only a little boy. The prieſt confeſſed that he had been guilty of crimes for which he deſerved death, both at the time of his condemnation, and that of his ſentence; but the crime for which he was to ſuffer, he declared himſelf innocent of: he ſaid but little at the gallows. His, and Meehan's, head were ſpiked upon the goal of Clonmell, the 25th of laſt month, where they remain a ſhocking ſpectacle. The trial was on the 12th of March.—The reaſonable, and thinking part of the papiſts in this country, are of opinion his ſentence was moſt equitable, while the ignorant are taught to conſider this tranſaction in the light of a perſecution, which, from the indulgence of the government, and the toleration allowed, ought to be very diſtant from their thoughts.

* *To prove an* alibi, *is to prove a perſon's being in another place.*

A Narrative, collected from authentic Materials, of the Proceedings at Clonmell, in the County of Tipperary, on the Trials of Mr. Edmond Sheehy, Mr. James Buxton, and Mr. John Farrel, for the Murder of John Bridge, on the Night of the 28th of October, 1764, by virtue of a ſpecial Commiſſion; which Trials began the 11th of April, and continued to the 15th, as every Priſoner was ſeparately tried, though for the ſame Fact. Taken from Exſhaw's Magazine for April 1766.

THE court, in order to ſhew the higheſt impartiality, had juries impanelled, conſiſting of ſixty each, for every priſoner that was then to be tried, and to the credit of the gentlemen of the county (who were all men of property) they appeared on the firſt call; of whom each of the priſoners challenged twenty peremptorily, but could not go further, not being able to ſhew cauſe of objection to any of the remainder.

Mr. Edmond Sheehy being put to the bar, and his indictment read, to which he pleaded not guilty; the lawyers for the crown proceeded to produce their evidence; and firſt called upon John Toohy, who being ſworn, declared, that the priſoner at the bar was preſent, and within two or three yards of John Bridge, when he received the fatal blow from Edmond Meehan.

Mary Brady was next produced, who ſwore that ſhe came up immediately after the murder of Bridge, and that the priſoner was preſent, together with the Rev. Mr. Sheehy and Edmond Meehan, and that the latter held in his hand a bill-hook all bloody, and that the prieſt, in her hearing, commended the action, and ſaid, all traitors ſhould be ſerved in the ſame manner.

The third evidence that was called upon, was Mr. James Herbert, farmer; he in the courſe of his examination, declared, that on Sunday the 28th of October, 1764, he was called upon by Roger Sheehy, who was then on horſe-back, and behind whom he rode to a meeting of about twenty or thirty perſons aſſembled, on the lands of Shanbally, near Clogheen, where they were

were ſworn by their prieſt, father Sheehy, to murder John Bridge, John Bagwell, Eſq; William Bagnel, Eſq; the Rev. Doctor Hewitſon, and every other perſon who ſhould oppoſe them; *that they would be faithful to the French king, conquer Ireland, and make it their own.*

After being thus ſworn, they came to the houſe of one Engliſh, on the lands of Shanbally, belonging to Mr. Calaghan, where Bridge was; they inſtantly called him out of the houſe, and took him to a field at ſome diſtance, where was another party of about one hundred and thirty; here they accuſed him of giving information, and lodging examinations againſt the Whiteboys, inſiſted that he ſhould by oath contradict whatever he had given information of, which he refuſed to do; hereupon one Burn made a ſtroke at him with a turf-ſlane, which he kept off with his arm; then Edmond Meehan took a bill-hook from under his coat, with which he ſtruck Bridge on the back part of his head, which ſo cleft his ſkull that he inſtantly expired; that the prieſt was then preſent, and ſo near as to be within the diſtance of two yards, with a book in his hand. After this (being firſt ſworn not to divulge what had been done) they put the body in a blanket, which they conveyed to a ploughed field at ſome diſtance, where they buried it, but in about eight days after, leſt the plough ſhould turn up the body, it was taken up and carried to a church-yard about two miles off, and there again buried.

The fourth evidence produced by the crown, was John Lonergan, who ſwore, that being ſent by his uncle, one Guinan, to the houſe of Engliſh, where Bridge had been, that on his way, between the hours of ten and twelve at night, he heard the noiſe of a number of people, by whom not caring to be ſeen, he concealed himſelf in a ditch; where he was diſcovered by Thomas M'Grath, who brought him out of the ditch, and put him on horſe-back behind the prieſt, with whom he rode ſome time, and on the way diſ-

covered the body of a dead man, wrapt up in a blanket, before a perſon on horſeback, and through a hole in the blanket, ſaw the head all bloody, and that there was a number of perſons attending it, both on foot and horſeback, of whom he knew father Sheehy, Edmond Meehan, Buck Sheehy, Thomas M'Grath, Bartholomew Kenneley, and John Toohy, and that when they came to a turn of the road, the prieſt let him down, directing him the ſhorteſt way home, and gave him three half crowns, charging him not to mention to his uncle, or any one elſe, what he had ſeen that night, and that he underſtood from the converſation of the people, that the dead body was that of John Bridge.

Here we ſhall cloſe the evidence for the crown, and proceed with the evidence in behalf of the priſoner, for whom James Prendergaſt, Eſq; was the firſt that appeared; he attempted to prove an *alibi*, by ſwearing, that on the 28th of October, 1764, the day on which the fact was committed, he and the priſoner, with their wives, dined at the houſe of Mr. Joſeph Tenniſon near Ardfinan in the county of Tipperary; where they continued until after ſupper, and that it was about eleven o'clock when he and the priſoner left the houſe of Mr. Tenniſon, and rode a conſiderable way together on their return to their reſpective homes, and that the priſoner had his wife behind him; that when they parted, he (Mr. Prendergaſt) rode directly home, where, on his arrival, he looked at the clock, and found it to be the hour of twelve exactly, and that as to the day he was poſitive and particular, the day following, the 29th, being the Fair-day of Clogheen; that he had deſired the priſoner to ſell ſome bullocks for him at the Fair, not being able to give his attendance; and that Paul Webber of Cork, butcher, was in treaty for the ſaid bullocks with the priſoner at the ſaid Fair, on the 29th.

Mr. Tenniſon was next examined, who declared he remembered the priſoner and Mr. Prendergaſt dining with

with him ſome time in the month of October 1764, but as to the day, was inclined to believe it was earlier in the month than the 28th, for that on the 29th September he dined with the corporation of Clonmell; that on the Wedneſday following he dined with the priſoner and Mr. Prendergaſt, at the priſoner's houſe, and that day he invited the priſoner and his wife, with Mr. Prendergaſt and his wife, to dine with him the Sunday following, and was poſitive that company did not dine with him on any other day in the month of October

Paul Webber of Cork, butcher, ſwore, that he was at the Fair of Clogheen on the 29th of October 1764, where he ſaw the priſoner, but was not in treaty with him for any bullocks belonging to Mr. Prendergaſt, but the priſoner told him, that Mr. Prendergaſt had ſome bullocks on his lands to diſpoſe of, on which he ſent a perſon to Mr Prendergaſt's houſe, who bought them from him.

Thomas Maſon, ſhepherd to the priſoner, was the next perſon produced; who ſwore to the night and hour of the priſoner's return above mentioned, and that he took from his maſter his horſe, and turned him out to the field. The following perſons were alſo produced by the priſoner, to diſcredit the teſtimony of John Toohy: viz. Bartholomew Griffith, ſurgeon, Daniel Griffith, and John Day, ſervant to Brooke Braſier, Eſq;

The purport of the evidence given by Bartholomew Griffith was to confront Toohy, who, in the courſe of the examination, being aſked by the priſoner, who gave him the new cloaths he then had on? anſwered, they were given him by his uncle Bartholomew Griffith, who, being examined, denied it Daniel Griffith declared, that Toohy was, on the 28th and 29th of October 1764, at his houſe at Cullen; on this the crown called upon Richard Chadwick of Ballynard in the county of Tipperary, Eſq; who being ſworn, de-

clared that Daniel Griffith was a perſon not to be credited upon his oath on that occaſion.

John Day ſwore, that Toohy lived for ſix weeks with his maſter Brooke Braſier, Eſq; when he behaved very ill, and was a perſon of bad character; but Mr. Braſier declared he did not know the ſaid Toohy, but that a perſon was in his family for that time of a very bad character, but that he did not know him.

The foregoing evidence of James Herbert for the crown, was very circumſtantial, and was not attempted to be invalidated, either in regard to his teſtimony or character; Mr. Herbert came to the aſſizes of Clonmell, in order to give evidence in favour of father Sheehy; but his arrival being made known to the grand jury (who before had found bills of high treaſon againſt him) they had not an opportunity before of having him taken, as they knew not his perſon; they ſent for Toohy, who ſaid he knew him very well, and would aſſiſt to take him; upon this William Bagnell, Eſq; attended Toohy, with ſome of the light-horſe, went in purſuit of him, and ſoon took him; when being told on what occaſion he was ſecured, ſaid, that if accepted of, he would make a full confeſſion, would diſcover the riſe and meetings of the White-Boys, and their intentions; acknowledged himſelf guilty of what he was accuſed, and had no reaſon to expect mercy from the government, but in doing all in his power to ſerve it; to this he was led by the appearance of Toohy, whom he knew able to convict him of the murder of John Bridge. The taking up of this accomplice gave room for ſome to report, that the evidences in favour of father Sheehy, were intimidated, and that he was deprived of the means to defend himſelf, and ſhew his innocence.—Never had priſoners more indulgence, every thing being allowed by which they could advantage; but ſure it muſt not be inſinuated, that the ſecuring of an accomplice, is depriving a priſoner of an evidence.—I ſhall particulariſe one inſtance in which the court indulged

indulged the priſoners, which was to change their dreſs before John Lonergan ſwore to the indentity of their perſons; who, notwithſtanding their diſguiſe, and their being mixed with a number of people, pointed them out diſtinctly with the cryer's ſtaff.

Mr. James Buxton, commonly called captain Buxton, on account of the power he had over the people he commanded, was the next perſon put to the bar to be tried, but the fact of which he was accuſed being the ſame for which Mr. Edmond Sheehy was convicted, and the evidence to ſupport the proſecution the ſame, it is not neceſſary to ſay more, than that the teſtimony, which has been already related, was in every particular ſupported by the additional evidence of Mr Thomas Bier, who was an accomplice, acknowledged being preſent when they all *ſwore allegiance to the French king*, and to murder John Bridge, &c. and that too in conſequence of a letter he received from father Sheehy; he was admitted an evidence to ſupport facts, ſo as not to admit of any doubt, being of a very high nature. From him and Mr. James Herbert an effectual diſcovery is expected to be made; Mr. Bier, in his teſtimony, declared, that at the time Bridge was murdered, the prieſt was within two or three yards of the unfortunate man, holding the book, on which he a little before had preſſed and exhorted him to ſwear for the purpoſe, as has been already mentioned.

Mr. James Farrel, commonly called Buck Farrel, being a young man of a genteel appearance, was the laſt convicted, and on the joint evidence of the proſecutors.

Tueſday, the 15th of April, they received ſentence to be executed the 3d of May in the town of Clogheen.

The following perſons, viz. Edmond Burke, John Burke, John Butler, Bartholomew Kenneley, Hugh Hayes, William Fling, Thomas Magrath, and Roger Sheehy, were acquitted of the murder of John Bridge;

* The court was ſo indulgent as to ſuppoſe no other of the party then aſſembled, to be guilty of the murder, but ſuch as immediately ſurrounded the unfortunate man.

but

but ſeveral of them were ordered to give bail for their appearance at the bar of the king's-bench, on the 28th of April inſtant, to anſwer to the charge of high treaſon.

The general character of the priſoners, until this unfortunate affair, was very reſpectable, as they lived in affluence and with reputation, aſſociated with the gentlemen of their neighbourhood, with whom they lived in the higheſt hoſpitality, frequently receiving and returning viſits. Their influence muſt have been conſiderable, otherwiſe they could not have brought after them, and inliſted the number of people they did, who were regularly trained and exerciſed in the military way with arms by their own officers; and it appears, that ſuch as were engaged were ſubject to martial law, by which they were tried on miſbehaviour. It was in reſentment of a whipping, which was inflicted on John Bridge with remarkable ſeverity, to which he was ſentenced by one of their court-martials, that led him to give evidence againſt them, by which he loſt his life.

We have already mentioned the reſpectable ſituation of theſe unhappy people, which muſt have afforded them as much comfort as they could expect, but whatever degree of ſurprize muſt be raiſed in the minds of our readers on account of their behaviour, it muſt be greatly heightened when they reflect on what could poſſibly be the inducement that led a clergyman, one eſteemed by his flock, amongſt whom he enjoyed an income of above two hundred pounds a year, and whoſe profeſſion ſhould have led him to promote peace and obedience to the laws, both human and divine; to ſuch as perſonally knew him, he appeared in the character of a plain man, free from deſign, but over this there muſt have been laid the moſt artful diſguiſe, otherwiſe he could not have acted his part ſo powerfully and effectually as he has done. Such attempts muſt become very dangerous to the ſtate, where men can be found ſo implicitly to give up all thoughts of their

their temporal, as well as eternal welfare, ſubmitting to the guidance of another's will, " who put *bitter* for *ſweet*, and *ſweet* for *bitter*," and totally diveſt themſelves of that monitor, which has been more immediately placed in them for their conduct; but if we conſider what has been done in other countries, and that too, where the religion they profeſs might be expected to have been their ſecurity, our ſurpriſe muſt ceaſe, their ſituation has been no better than our own; but they have had the wiſdom to expel the authors of their troubles to a baniſhment, 'tis apprehended too fatal to us.

An authentic narrative of the death and execution of Mr. Edmond Sheehy, Mr. James Buxton, and Mr. James Farrel, who ſuffered at Clogheen on the 3d of May, 1766, for the murder of John Bridge; with their declarations carefully compared with thoſe in the hands of Mr. Butler, ſub-ſheriff of the county of Tipperary, who received them from the unfortunate people, at the place of execution; and atteſted by him. Taken from Exſhaw's Magazine for May, 1766.

To the PUBLISHER.

Sir,

THrough the channel of your magazine, we have received the beſt accounts of the proceedings at Clonmell, on the ſpecial commiſſion lately held there, which has produced a cataſtrophe not leſs melancholy to their reſpective families, who feel it, than to the kingdom in general; for how diſturbed muſt be the ſtate, where many of the inhabitants (not of the meaner ſort) are convicted of crimes, which, if effected, would have deſtroyed the conſtitution.

In your laſt magazine you gave the dying declara- the Rev. Mr. Sheehy, and by the incloſures you have an opportunity of doing the ſame in your next, by inſerting the declarations of the other three unfortunate perſons, who have lately ſuffered, not doubting but they

they will make an acceptable article in your collection; for the curioſity of mankind has the ſtrongeſt tendency to know every particular of the *very* unfortunate, as well as of thoſe, who have been more remarkably otherwiſe; the *minutiæ* in both are expected.

There is not the leaſt room to doubt of their authenticity, as they have been carefully compared with the originals, in the hands of the ſub-ſheriff, delivered to him by the criminals, at the place of execution, which they did with a peculiar ſort of care, not doubting but they would be made as public, as that of father Sheehy's, who was careful to convey his, to a very reſpectable perſon, who (he knew) could immediately diſcloſe it to the fountain, from whence mercy would flow, had not the preſervation of the peace, and the public good forbade it.

The total denial of facts, of which they were convicted, runs through the whole, and I cannot avoid ſaying, to the aſtoniſhment of all here; for criminals never had a more reſpectable and diſpaſſionate jury; a jury as well inclined to ſerve them, as their country; but an ecclairciſſement is reſerved to another day, for thoſe that require it.

The ſheriff, who proceeded with decency, called upon the priſoners early in the morning of the 3d inſtant, ſo as to leave the goal of Clonmell for Clogheen, about ſix o'clock, to which place he was attended, by the regiment of light dragoons, commanded by lieutenant colonel Harcourt, and two companies of Armiger's foot; theſe the commander had previouſly made ready for the purpoſe, by an order from government. Edmond Sheehy and James Buxton were put on the ſame car, James Farrel on the next, and the executioner on another, with his apparatus, and the gallows ſo contrived as to be immediately put together; they thus proceeded in awful proceſſion to Clogheen, where they arrived about twelve o'clock, the diſtance being above eleven miles.

In

In the moſt open part of the village, the gallows was erected, and that in a very ſhort time, while the priſoners remained at a ſmall diſtance in devotion with their prieſt, for about two hours, when it was thought neceſſary to execute the ſentence the law of their country had doomed them to ſuffer: They were then all three put upon one car, and drawn under the gallows, where, after remaining ſome time they were tied up, and in that ſituation each read his declaration, and afterwards handed it to the ſheriff.

Sheehy met his fate, with the moſt undaunted courage, and delivered his declaration with as much compoſure of mind, as if he had been repeating a prayer; when this awful ſcene was finiſhed, they were turned off, upon at ſignal given by Sheehy, who ſeemed in a ſort of exultation, and ſprung from the car; he was dead immediately, and after the criminals had hung ſome time, they were cut down, and the executioner ſevered their heads from their bodies, which were delivered to their reſpective friends.

Sheehy's intrepid behaviour, ſet off by an engaging perſon, attracted much pity and compaſſion from all preſent; but the moſt oppreſſive part of this tragic ſcene yet remains to be told, when I ſay, that Sheehy has left a widow with five children to bemoan his unhappy fate, Buxton three, and Farrell, who had not been married more than three months, has left his wife pregnant; they were all buried the evening of that day, as particularly requeſted by themſelves, where we hope they reſt, having made atonement for their crimes, and let not the imputation of the fathers misfortunes be remembered to the prejudice of their families.

Caſhell,
May 28th, 1766.

Your conſtant Reader, &c.

The dying declaration of Mr. Edmond Sheehy, delivered at the place of execution, to Mr. Butler, ſub-ſheriff of the county of Tipperary.

AS I am ſhortly to appear before the great tribunal of God, where I expect, thro' the paſſion and ſufferings of my Redeemer, to be forgiven the many crimes and offences, which I have committed againſt ſo great and merciful a God: I ſincerely forgive the world, I forgive my judges, jury, proſecutors, and every other perſon, who had a hand in ſpilling my innocent blood; may the great God forgive them, bleſs them, and may they never leave this world, without ſincerely repenting, and meriting that felicity, which I hope, through the wounds of Chriſt, ſoon to enjoy.

I think it incumbent, as well for the ſatisfaction of the public, as the eaſe of my own mind, to declare the truth as to every crime, with which I was impeached from the beginning, to the day of my conviction.

1ſt. The meeting at Kilcaroon, ſworn by James Herbert, and the murder of John Bridge, ſworn by him, and the reſt of the informers.

2dly, The meeting at Ardfinan, ſworn by Guinan, in October 1763, and ſeveral other meetings and treaſonable practices, at all which I was ſworn to be preſent, as the principal acting perſon.

3dly, That I had an hand in burning John Fearifé's turf, and extirpating his orchard, taking arms from ſoldiers, burning Joſeph Tenniſon's corn, levelling walls, and many other attrocious crimes againſt the peace and tranquillity of the preſent happy conſtitution.

11ſt. I now ſolemnly declare, that I did not ſee a White-boy ſince the year 1762, and then but twice or thrice; and that I never was preſent at the levelling of the *rock of Caſhell*, or any other wall, or commons,

in

in my life, nor even gave counſel or advice to have it done, or ever had any previous knowledge of any ſuch intentions, nor do I know to this minute, any one man that was at the levelling of ſaid wall.

2dly. I declare that I never ſaw Herbert, until the day of my trial, and that I never was at a meeting at Kilcaroon, never heard an oath of allegiance propoſed nor adminiſtered in my life to any ſovereign king or prince, never knew any thing of the murder of Bridge, until I heard it publicly mentioned, nor did I know there was any ſuch deſign on foot, and if I had I would have hindered it, if in my power.

3dly. The battle of Newmarket, for which I was tried, I declare I never was at Newmarket, nor did I know there was a reſcue intended, nor do I believe did any man in the county of Tipperary.

4thly. I declare that I never meant, or intended rebellion, high-treaſon, or maſſacre, or ever heard any ſuch wicked ſcheme mentioned, or propoſed, nor do I believe there were any ſuch matters in view, and if there were, that I am wholly ignorant of them.

5thly. I declare that I never knew of either French or Spaniſh officers, commiſſions, or money paid thoſe poor ignorant fools, called White-boys, or a man held in the light of a gentleman, connected with them.

I was often attacked, during my confinement in Kilkenny, by the Rev. Laurence Broderick, and the Rev. John Hewetſon, to make uſeful diſcoveries*, by bringing

* However the intention may be to ſet theſe gentlemen, and others in a diſagreeable light; who made the ſame tender of mercy, if merited by ſervice done to government; they (in what they did) have acted very conſiſtently with their duty, and the office they have in the peace. Crimes of a general and high nature are uſually, I may ſay always, committed by numbers, and combinations are more difficult to fathom than the miſchiefs done by individuals. Theſe are the enemies that ſtates have to fear, and againſt ſuch every juſt polity will guard itſelf; and for this purpoſe government frequently makes a tender of mercy, not conſidering the weight of the criminal's guilt, but the ri-

ke

bringing in men of weight and fortune; that there was an intended maſſacre and rebellion, French officers, commiſſions, and money paid, and by ſo doing that they would procure my pardon, difficult as it was.

The day after my trial Edmond Bagnell came to me from the Grand Jury, and told me, if I would put thoſe matters in a clear light, that I would get my pardon: I made anſwer, that I would declare the truth; which would not be heard.—Sir William Baker's ſon, and Mr. Matthew Bunbury came to me the ſame evening, with words to the ſame purpoſe, to which I replied as before: nothing on this occaſion would give ſufficient content, without my proving the above, and that the *prieſt died with a lie in his mouth*, which was the phraſe Mr. Hewetſon made uſe of; I ſent for Sir Thomas Maude the day of my ſentence, and declared to him the meeting at Drumlemmon, where I ſaw nothing remarkable, but two or three fellows, who ſtole hay from Mr. John Keating, whipped *, and ſworn never to ſteal to the value of a ſhilling during life. I ſaw Thomas Beer there, which I told Sir Thomas and Mr. Bunbury, and begged of them never to give credit to Herbert, nor the reſt, who knew nothing of the matter, except what Beer knew. I do declare I ſaw Beer take a voluntary oath, more than once in the jail of Clonmell, that he knew nothing of the murder, nor do I believe he did; may God forgive him, and the reſt of thoſe unhappy informers, and all thoſe who had an hand in encouraging to ſwear away innocent lives.

he may be of, to avert dangers, and direct the rod of chaſtiſement where it ſhould fall; this prudence directs, and juſtice requires, in order to protect the innocent from falling a victim, who frequently are the ſcape-goat, and under whoſe misfortunes the guilty ſhelter themſelves.

Theſe reflections, which are founded on hiſtorical facts, muſt take off whatever odium may be intended on the part theſe gentlemen have acted for the ſervice of their country.

* *Quere*, By what court power was this puniſhment inflicted?

I further declare, that I have endeavoured, as much as was in my power, to ſuppreſs the ſpirit of the White-boys, where I thought or ſuſpected the leaſt ſpark of it to remain.

May the great God open the eyes of thoſe gentlemen, and incline their hearts to truth and mercy, not to be biaſſed nor hurried on, by party or particular prejudices, to perſevere any longer, in falſely repreſenting thoſe matters to the beſt of Kings, and to the humaneſt and beſt of governments, which I pray God may long continue.

The above is a ſincere and honeſt declaration, as I expect to ſee God, nor would I make any other for the univerſe, which is clear to the gentlemen, who offered me life, if I would comply.

I die in the 33d year of my age, an unworthy member of the church of Rome, the Lord have mercy on my ſoul, Amen, Amen.

I was informed that Mr. Tenniſon's corn was burnt by one of his own ſervants, but accidentally, and that ſince my confinement; I thought ſo always.

Signed by me this 2d of May, 1766.

EDMOND SHEEHY.

Preſent,
JAMES BUXTON,
JAMES FARREL.

N. B. This declaration was not in the hand-writing of Mr. Sheehy, but ſigned by him, and witneſſed by the two other criminals.

The dying Declaration of Mr. James Buxton, delivered at the Place of Execution, to Mr. Butler, Sub-ſheriff of the County of Tipperary.

WHEREAS I, the ſaid James Buxton, was arraigned at my trial, for having aided, and aſſiſted, at many flagrant crimes againſt his majeſty's laws and government, ſince the riſe of the Whiteboys; upon the information of Michael Guinan and John Toohy: now I think it proper to ſatisfy the public by this declaration, which I make to God and the world, concerning my knowledge in theſe matters.

1ſt. As to the murder of John Bridge; I ſolemnly declare, in the preſence of God, before whoſe holy tribunal I ſhortly expect to appear, that I neither conſulted or adviſed, aided or abetted, nor had the leaſt notion of any that did, to the killing of John Bridge; nor did my proſecutor John Toohy (by virtue of the aforeſaid declaration) ever ſerve me an hour ſince I was born; neither did I ever lay my eyes on him, to the beſt of my knowledge, but one night on the 18th of September laſt, when he lay at my houſe, and went by the name of Lucius O' Brien: he was purſued next morning by one William O' Brien of Clonmell, whom he robbed of ſome cloaths two days before, and was taken in Clogheen for the ſame robbery; and ſaid Brien's cloaths and other things found upon him, for which he was committed to goal, and there turned approver.

As to every other thing that Michael Guinan and ſaid Toohy ſwore againſt me; I further ſolemnly declare in the preſence of my greatGod, that I neither did any thing, nor was at any meeting, or levelling, that ever they ſwore againſt me, except Dromlemon; and, upon the word of a dying man, neither of them was there; nor was any man, upon the ſame word of a dying man, that was yet apprehended, or ſuffered, in my belief, concerned in the murder of Bridge; and that I verily believe, and am perſuaded, no proſecutor,

ſecutor, that yet appeared, was preſent at, or any ways concerned in that murder; though Thomas Beere (God forgive him!) ſwore "That he and I "were within two yards of John Bridge, when he was "murdered by Edmund Meaghan, with a ſtroke of "a bill-kook."

Secondly, I ſolemnly proteſt and declare, in the preſence of my great God, that I never heard, or ever learned, of a rebellion intended in this kingdom; nor ever heard of, nor ever ſaw, any French officers or French money coming into this kingdom; nor ever heard that any merchant ſupplied, or intended to ſupply, any money for the Whiteboys, or any other occaſion; nor ever ſaw, heard, or could find out, that any allegiance was ſworn to any prince or potentate in the world, but to his preſent majeſty king GEORGE the third: and, I further declare, on my dying words, that I never knew, nor diſcovered, nor even imagined, that any maſſacre whatſoever was intended againſt any perſon or perſons in this kingdom; and I declare, in the preſence of almighty God, that I poſitively believe, and am perſuaded, that if any of the foregoing treacherous and treaſonable combinations were to be carried on, I would have learned, or heard, ſomething of them.

Thirdly, that laſt aſſizes of Kilkenny, where I ſtood indicted, and was arraigned, for the battle of Newmarket, the R. Mr. H------n, and the R. Mr. B------k, tampered with me for ſix hours, and more, ſetting forth the little chance I had for my life there. (Kilkenny) and though I ſhould, that I would have none at all at Clonmell; but that they would write to lord C------k immediately to procure my pardon, if I would turn *approver*, and ſwear to an *intended rebellion*, *treaſonable conſpiracies*, and a *maſſacre*; and all this againſt the principal *popiſh clergy* and *gentlemen* of my country, whoſe names they had ſet down in a long piece of paper; but wanted particularly to ſwear

againſt 'ſquire Wiſe, Philip Long, Dominick Farrell, Martin Murphy, Dr. C------h, and Nicholas Lee; and that I ſhould alſo ſwear that prieſt Sheehy *died with a lie in his mouth*; likewiſe that I was at the battle of Newmarket, and received a letter from one Edmund Tobin to be at the ſaid battle; and this, in order to coroborate the Informer Toohy's oath, and the oaths of three others who ſwore they ſaw me there; one in particular ſwore he broke his fire-lock on my head.

Now, as I expect ſalvation from the hands of God, I neither received a meſſage or letter, nor heard, nor diſcovered, that this battle of Newmarket was to be; nor knew any thing of it, until it was adver-tiſed: and I further declare, in the preſence of my great God, that I never was nearer this place they call Newmarket, than the turn-pike road that leads from Dublin to Corke; for I never was two yards eaſtwards of that road.

As to the ſcheme of the White-boys, (as far as I could find out, in the pariſh of Tubrid, where I lived) nothing was meant but putting a ſtop to the oppreſſive and arbitrary valuations of tythe-jobbers: and for this end, the people agreed to deal with none but the immediate proprietors, and alſo to detect rogues, and robbers, and hinder their miſchievous practices: as to levelling, that I never, found out any ſuch thing to have been committed in ſaid pariſh, of any conſequence; but one ditch belonging to John Griffin, of Kilcoran; nor was I ever privy to any wall or ditch being ever levelled by White-boys, in the county of Tipperary, or any other county. I alſo declare that I never approved of the proceedings of levellers, and that I frequently adviſed all ſuch as I ſuſpected of ſuch vile practices, to deſiſt; for that they would at length bring a ſcourge upon the innocent, as well as the guilty.

Given under my hand this 2d day of May, 1766.

JAMES BUXTON.

The

The dying Declaration, of Mr. James Farrell, delivered at the Place of Execution, to Mr. Butler, Sub ſheriff of the County of Tipperary.

AS I am ſhortly to appear before the divine tribunal, where I expect, through the paſſion of our Redeemer, to be forgiven the many crimes and offences which I committed againſt ſo great and juſt a God; I now ſincerely forgive the world in general, and, particularly, thoſe who have been the means of wrongfully ſpilling my blood.

The crimes that I am to die for, are, 1ſt. the murder of John Bridge.

2dly. The ſwearing allegiance at Kilcaroon;

3dly. The burning of Jos. Tenniſon's Corn, John Ferris's turf; and being concerned in all other things that belonged to the White-boys.

4thly. The being at the battle of Newmarket, which I ſtood a tryal for.

I am as innocent of the aforeſaid crimes as the child unborn, as to either counſelling, aiding, aſſiſting in, or knowledge of ſaid facts: I therefore think it proper to declare what the following gentlemen wanted me to do, in order to ſpill innocent blood, which was not in the power of any man in the world to make me do or perform.

On the day I was condemned, the following gentlemen, viz. the R. J-----H---n, J---B---l, and ſome of the light-horſe officers, came all with me from the court-houſe to the goal, where they carried me into a room, and told me it was in my power to ſave my life. I aſked them how?---They told me, by ſwearing againſt the following perſons, Martin Murphy, Philip Long of Waterford, and ſome merchants from Corke, likewiſe Bp. C------h and lord D-----e's brother, and a good many other clergymen; alſo James Nagle, Robert Keating, John Purcell, Thomas Dogherty, Thomas Long, John Baldwin, Thomas Butler of Grange, Nicholas Lee, with a great many other gentlemen of the county of Tipperary, and reſponſible

ſponſible farmers; as encouraging French officers in the enliſting of men for the French ſervice, in order to raiſe a rebellion in this kingdom; and that they diſtributed French money.

They alſo ſaid, that in caſe they ſhould get a perſon to do all theſe things, it would not do, without my ſwearing to the murder of John Bridge; to concur with the reſt of the informers, and ſtrengthen their evidence.

I ſolemnly declare to his divine Majeſty, that I was never preſent at the levelling a ditch or wall in my life; nor was ever at a meeting, of any kind, of the White-boys.

I declare alſo, that I had neither hand or part in bringing James Herbert from the county of Limerick; and that, to the beſt of my knowledge, he ſwore not one word of truth; in particular, what he ſwore againſt me was undoubtedly falſe. The great God bleſs all my proſecutors, and all other perſons who had a hand in ſpilling my innocent blood, which the divine tribunal knows to be ſo.

Given under my hand this 2d. day of May, 1766.

JAMES FARRELL.

Extract

Extract of a letter from Clonmell, September the 25th, 1766.

——ONE Broderick, a felon, under a rule of tranſportation, (when they were taking him with other priſoners tranſmitted about ten days ago to Limerick, in order to be thence tranſported, ſtopped at the great door of Clonmell-goal, and harangued the people preſent, and told them, " of the wicked me- " thods, which were taken to prevail upon ſeveral of " the priſoners, *to ſwear againſt innocent people*; par- " ticularly upon himſelf, *who had been always bred a* " *proteſtant.*" He named the perſons that attacked him, particularly the r——d Mr. D****s, the r—d Mr. M****e, and another cl---gy---n, and ſaid a great deal of c--p--n M****e; then began to mention the three c--ck--lds: Upon which the ſheriff immediately ſtood up, and checked him; whereupon he ſtopped.

FINIS.